

FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM!

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MINERS STRIKE

A victory for the striking miners is now feared not only by Thatcher and the Tory government but also by the present leadership of the labour and trade union movement. For such a victory will have been gained through methods of direct confrontation with the state — methods which are totally alien to those who have hung on to their powerful positions in the labour movement through negotiation, compromise and compliance with the ruling class, its laws and institutions. It has been the miners' determined resistance to organised police violence and their refusal to comply with the openly political judgements of ruling class courts that have taken the strike into its eighth month and guaranteed it a lasting political impact on the working class movement in Britain.

No one more than Arthur Scargill embodies the shift that has taken place in working class politics as a result of the miners' strike. His refusal, for example, to purge his contempt of the High Court judgement of 28 September, which declared that the strike in Yorkshire and

On 7 September, the courts but also Court ordered political challenge to ing UDF members party leader Kinnock ed indefinitely, w Kinnock, ambitious comrades, before knows only the path tions on 22 August and so desperately there were insuff spectability. For him detention. Wit class conflict. So he regime had in the warning that 'we cannot on, but legality because it does not suit us at the present time'. In contrast Arthur Scargill states that he ould rather go to prison than betray his class: 'I stand by my class, by my union — and if that means prison so be it. We have come too far, we have suffered too much for there to be any compromise with either the judiciary or the government'. Scargill and Kinnock represent the fundamentally divergent paths which now face the British working class as a result of the miners' strike. In this way the miners' strike has drama-

tically demonstrated that divisions are a necessary precondition not only for the victory of the miners' strike but for the political advance of the working class as a whole.

TUC Conference

The 1984 TUC Conference (3-7 September) took place amidst speculation that it would be the scene of a major battle over support for the striking miners. As miners fought police on the picket lines at pits throughout the country the TUC, as expected, passed a resolution which was designed to promise everything and deliver nothing. The resolution, couched in deliberately vague terms, supported the NUM's opposition to pit closures, pledged a 'concerted campaign' to raise money, and asked members not to move coal or coke or oil substituted for coal or coke across NUM official picket lines, and not to use oil substituted for coal — the latter two points to be subject to full discussion with the TUC General Council and relevant unions. The motion was overwhelmingly passed. The General Council had achieved its objective of temporarily papering over the potential cracks and divisions in the

TUC caused by the miners' strike (see FRFI 42). There were no riots outside the Conference Hall — only 4-5,000 gathered outside. There were no battles on the Congress floor. The scabs, led by Eric Hammond (EEPTU), made an ineffective appearance and were booed. The AUEW could now 'support' the miners as they had been drawn back into the TUC fold. Len Murray, retiring TUC General Secretary, all too clearly explained the aim of the whole exercise when he said that 'the purpose of the procedures set out in the statement is to devise arrangements to make the dispute more effective and to make mass picketing unnecessary'. He also used his speech to attack 'picket line violence'. 'There have been scenes which reflect no credit whatsoever on the standing and reputation of the trade union movement'. The very next day, the conference gave a standing ovation to Kinnock, 'the policemen's friend', when he, too, attacked the miners' fightback against police violence:

'violence, I do not have to tell this Congress... disgusts union opinion and divides union attitudes... and is alien to the temperament and the intelligence of the British trade union movement'.

As FRFI accurately pointed out on the eve of Conference (see FRFI 42), even the paper-thin unity achieved by this resolution has barely resulted in a shred of increased support for the miners. The cracks began to show even as the Conference ended. Terry Duffy, leader of



Maltby, South Yorkshire: After a police charge. Eyewitnesses say this man was kicked and truncheoned on the ground by 4 police officers.

State authority challenged

the AUEW, confided to the *Observer* (9 September 1984) at the end of the conference: 'There's no way our members are going to support any shutdown of a power station.'

Following the conference, TUC leaders have sought to wring every possible concession from the NUM and to place every obstacle in the way of gaining support. On 16 September it was reported that 'senior' TUC leaders were making support contingent on the NUM being seen to do everything in their power to get a settlement, insisting for example that the NUM go to see ACAS.

The miners continue to receive financial and material support from a wide

cross-section of the working class. But still no real effective solidarity action which would decisively affect the outcome of the strike has taken place. The second dock strike to take place during the miners' strike began on 24 August with the decision by the British Steel Corporation (BSC) at Ravenscraig to unload 80,000 tons of steel from the *Ostia* at Hunterston, without using TGWU dockers' labour. The resulting strike was never total, and was restricted throughout mainly to ports covered by the dock labour scheme. The end of the strike on 19 September was brought about by an agreement between dockers and steel workers unions for quotas of coal going

into Ravenscraig which actually rise above those agreed before. 18,000 tons per week are to be allowed in for the first month, 20,000 for the second, then 22,500 the month after. Instrumental in this shameful agreement, which completely turned its back on the miners' needs, were the Labour Party Shadow Transport spokesman John Prescott and Labour MP for Motherwell South, Jeremy Bray. The deal was roundly condemned by Arthur Scargill who said 'The NUM do not expect anyone to make deals which result in people crossing our picket lines'.

The workers in the power industry remain bitterly divided over the possibility of action in support of the miners. After a meeting of the nine unions involved on 28 September, the general unions — the TGWU and GMBATU — said they would ask their members to take action. Others, particularly the main crafts unions — the EEPTU (Eric Hammond) and the Engineers and Managers Association (John Lyons) — strongly opposed any blocking of coal.

On the railways, despite action by a number of workers, coal continues to be moved from the working Notts coalfield. The threatened NUR/ASLEF action in September against rail cuts was withdrawn so that further talks could take place. No doubt British Rail was told by Thatcher, as happened earlier in the miners' strike, to run no risk of a rail strike at the present time. Support from power and rail workers will become absolutely vital if the government begins the attempt to move pit-head coal stocks — as is widely suggested must happen during November if power cuts are to be avoided.

The Labour Party Conference

At the TUC Conference the dead weight of the Union leadership was able to effectively tone down the impact of the miners' strike on its proceedings. At the Labour Party Conference, however, this was not possible to anything like the same degree. First, many Labour Party activists were present who are involved

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The youth of South Africa bury their dead comrades and pledge to continue the fight against apartheid

Botha's 'reforms' bite the dust

It has been the courageous response of the black masses in South Africa which has tipped the balance against Botha. Mass opposition to the elections fraud has grown over the weeks, accompanied by protest against the increase in rents in black townships, the education system, rises in bus and train fares. The apartheid regime immediately reverted to open brutality with whips, batons, bullets and detention without trial. More than 55 black people, many of them young children, have been murdered, thousands have been injured.

Over the last month, ten miners striking for a living wage were gunned down and over 600 miners injured in bloody battles with the police and fascist security men hired by the mine owners. Hundreds of people are being held in indefinite detention — over 200 United Democratic Front (UDF) members, inc-

cluding many of their leaders, have been interned.

Police violence began during the elections when peaceful demonstrators protested on the streets. Young children were shot down. Politics was outlawed with a ban on all indoor meetings, defined as two or more people (outdoor meetings have been banned for some time). Police tried to prevent the people attending the funerals of the murdered demonstrators. Thousands defied the ban by attending the funerals, turning them into mass political events, singing freedom songs. At one funeral of a black youth, 3,000 youth chanted 'We of Umkhonto we Sizwe are ready to sacrifice ourselves to kill all the Boers'. On 23 September, 500 people were arrested at the banned funeral of a black youth, and on 26 September all Soweto



There has been a dramatic change in the fortunes of white South Africa over the last year. 1984 opened with the signing of Nkomati Accords with Mozambique and the prospect of similar treaties with Angola. Botha's regime claimed that these pacts heralded a new dawn of peace in Southern Africa, with black independent states once again co-existing with apartheid. The ANC and SWAPO were supposed to disappear with the closure of their external bases in Mozambique and Angola. Botha celebrated these 'victories' by a European tour to welcome him back into the fold of imperialist brotherhood. The new constitution and the elections for Indian and 'Coloured' people were intended to round-off the year nicely and con the world that the apartheid sewer could come up smelling like roses. 1984 looks like ending very differently contrary to the expectations of Botha and his imperialist backers. The elections fraud blew up in Botha's face when the Indian, Black and 'Coloured' masses refused to participate, and demonstrated their contempt for those who compromise with apartheid, out on the streets. SWAPO and the ANC have refused to disappear and now Botha has to send troops into Mozambique.

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in miners' support groups and who have had direct experience of police harassment and arrest when collecting food and money for the miners. Second, High Court writs were served on Arthur Scargill and four other NUM leaders on the first day of the Conference, threatening massive fines and a possible gaol sentence for contempt of court because they continue to insist that the strike in Yorkshire and Derbyshire remains official. The refusal of the miners' leaders to comply with the writ, the unanimous decision of the NUM Executive Committee to back Arthur Scargill in stating that the strike remained official and the presence of the miners' leader in the Conference Hall on Thursday at the time he was due to appear in the High Court ensured that the miners' strike remained the central issue of the Labour Party Conference. Kinnoch's major speech to the conference in which he equated workers' violence with state violence and argued that the law had to be obeyed came what may be totally eclipsed by the miners' principled stand. Kinnoch's slavish adherence to ruling class law was effectively neutralised by this example of real class politics.

The prelude to the Labour Party Conference in the week beginning 1 October was marked by a series of manoeuvres which vainly attempted to limit the effect of the miners' strike on the conference and in particular to eliminate any criticism of the police from the conference agenda. This, above all, was the issue which could acutely embarrass Neil Kinnoch and be a setback for his ambitions of being a future Prime Minister. Despite press rumours of some back stage deal struck between Kinnoch, Orme and Scargill (rumours which Scargill denied) the NUM resolution attacking police violence went forward to the conference. In addition, a section of the NEC statement to conference on the miners' strike which criticised pickets' violence, was deleted. In the event, Scargill received 2 standing ovations and 4 motions were passed

the socialist's only way and route to power. We cannot sharpen legality as our main weapon for the future and then simultaneously scorn legality because it does not suit us at the present time'. This is just pure deception. As Kinnoch well knows, any defence of trade union rights at the present time involves breaking the law. Without breaking the law, the miners would have been defeated months ago. Kinnoch wants nothing to do with militant trade unionism. A TGWU attempt to put a motion to the conference openly siding with the NUM's defiance of the High Court was dropped lest the Labour Party and trade union leaders should—horror of horrors—be found to be in contempt of the law themselves.

Following the Labour Party conference criticism of police violence against the miners, Police Federation chairman, Leslie Curtis, made it clear that the police might be unable to serve the public under a future Labour government. In what he called a 'warning shot' to the Labour leaders, Curtis demonstrated the police's contempt for democracy, and showed the conscious political role that the police intend to play in future events. That his statement was backed by Home Secretary Leon Brittan shows the true contempt that the ruling class has for legality and democracy if it ceases to work in its favour.

State orchestrated violence

The government and the NCB have strained every nerve to get the 'back-to-work' movement off the ground in striking areas. On 27 September Thatcher personally visited police stationed at the North Yorkshire division police HQ and, in the manner of a general addressing her troops, told police who had just returned from duty at Kellingley Colliery that she was 'extremely grateful' for what they were doing. As the police have more and more been confronted by the striking miners' refusal to be beaten, they have had to raise the spectre of new and evil forces at work, in order to justify their increas-

in an attempt to open up the striking pits and break the strikers' resistance. Over two weeks alone, the police operation to get seven scabs in to Kiveton Park Colliery cost £350,000, according to the local parish council. Arrests on 2 October stood at 7,149, 39 miners have been sent to gaol and curfews up to 24 hours continue to be imposed. In a threatening speech, Home Secretary Leon Brittan stated, referring to those charged with so-called 'intimidation' of scabs:

'Some of those are charged with serious offences carrying very severe maximum penalties... Those tempted to try their hand at violence and crime in future might care to reflect on the fact that arson, assault causing grievous bodily harm and criminal damage with intent to endanger life, are offences which carry life sentences as a maximum.'

He added that serious criminal damage carries up to 10 years and that there were 'no limits' to charges for riot and affray. Since pickets are arrested on any pretext this means that any miner deciding to picket runs the risk of a long prison sentence. Seven miners have been charged under the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act of 1875 which was last used against the Shrewsbury 5. Four miners have now been arrested for allegedly shouting 'death-threats' at Robert Taylor as he was driving in his car. Taylor is one of the miners from Manton Colliery who has had the writ served on Arthur Scargill. Three of the four miners charged have been remanded in custody. It isn't difficult to imagine the sort of justice that will be handed out after a press campaign of lies and slander against them.

A recent *Panorama* programme showed the part that the NCB play in this operation. The manager of Warsop colliery could be seen in his office with detailed wall maps showing every working and striking miner's house marked in different colours. Each potential 'scab' was discussed in detail by the managers and was later visited by NCB

stated: 'There is a conspiracy against the miners by the police, the magistrates, the law courts, the bloody lot.' The following day, 5 September, the Kent miners fought back. At Betcheshanger Colliery 12 police were hurt, at Tilmanstone straw fires were started and trees felled to make barricades. The return to work in Kent has been halted.

At the Yorkshire pits situated on the largest coalfields decisive battles are being fought by miners resisting riot-clad and mounted police attacks. Kellingley, North Yorkshire, is the biggest pit in Britain and so would be a vital component in breaking the strike. On 6 September 4,000 pickets gathered to stop two scabs. Police carrying long riot shields moved against pickets—one of whom was taken unconscious to hospital. An ITN camera crew's car was overturned and set on fire. The A645 was closed for two hours. Police attacks at Kellingley carried on for five days.

At Kiveton Park, near Sheffield, on 7 September hundreds of riot police chased pickets through streets and gardens. 3,000 pickets had arrived in the early hours of the morning to find mounted riot police in wait. Roads were sealed off and police used searchlights to try and pick out leaders. As the scabs arrived in their armoured van, police wielded long staves against pickets, batoning them to the ground and chasing them over walls. Those arrested had their hands bound behind their backs with strips of leather. This has only strengthened the resolve of the striking miners. Mass picketing has continued ever since.

At Maltby pit on 21 September, 6,000 pickets arrived to stop 7 construction workers from going into work. It can be no coincidence at all that the construction company involved is none other than Cementation Ltd, builder of universities in Oman, employer of the services of Mark Thatcher, owned by close pal of Thatcher Nigel Brookes. Police in riot gear battled the next day with 4,500 pickets. Armoured vans with shields attached were used to shelter riot police as they charged the picket lines. MP Kevin Barron who tried to stop pickets throwing stones and got struck by police batons for his pains said that the men who attacked him were wearing boiler suits without numbers. A young miner, Ian Wright, was batoned to the ground and kicked unconscious. Pickets stated that the police behaved 'like animals'.

On 1 October one of the biggest police operations of the seven-months strike took place at Manton Colliery, Notts, to get four scabs into work including Robert Taylor and Ken Foulstone—the two miners who want to put Arthur Scargill in gaol. A vast army of police using helicopter surveillance, horses and dogs, were used to prevent picketing miners blocking their return to work.

This militant response to each and every attempt to break the strike continues and has prevented any 'back-to-work' movement from emerging in the militant areas.

Miners strike at the crossroads?

According to a whole number of sources, coal stocks will be at a critical level of around 8m tons by November. The latest survey by a firm of city stockbrokers estimates that there is 4-6m tons at the working pits, with 3m tons stockpiled in Holland. Coal imports have doubled since July last year—to £20.7m from £10.9m (mostly from the US, Poland and the EEC) and oil imports have increased 2½ times—to £141.6m from £63.6m last year. Oil is 50% more expensive to use than coal in the production of electricity. £750m has been added on to the cost of electricity since the beginning of the miners' strike and the government is now considering the imposition of a 'Scargill levy' on electricity bills. All of this means that the government, if power cuts are to be avoided, is more and more faced with the prospect of having to move the 18m tons of coal still stored at striking pit heads. To move this coal would almost definitely involve the use of troops and would bring massive confrontations with miners and possibly other sections of the labour movement. It is for this reason that the 'back-to-work' movement' option has been played so vigorously during the last month. Unless the major pits in Yorkshire and other areas are now opened up, Thatcher will have no choice but to up the confrontation stakes or to accept defeat.

On the first day of the TUC Conference half-an-hour before the debate on the miners began, new talks were announced between the NCB and NUM. For the rest of the week they were on and then off. Finally the talks began on

8 September, broke off five days later over the fundamental issue of 'uneconomic' pits. The NUM has unwaveringly refused to accept MacGregor's definition of 'economic' as one that is simply geared to profits—one which leaves on one side the devastation and waste of whole communities and future generations. As Arthur Scargill has pointed out, 81% of new investment has been in the central coalfields as opposed to those of Scotland and South Wales, where many of the pits have, as a result, been designated 'uneconomic'. For these reasons the NUM refused to accept MacGregor's latest pathetic attempt to gloss over the issue. The NCB's new term were that they must retain the right to decide the future of pits 'in line with their responsibilities'. As is well known by now, MacGregor's 'responsibilities' are solely to the brutal logic of capitalism and to Thatcher's aim of crushing the NUM.

On Friday 28 September the result was declared in the strike ballot of the 17,000 strong pit deputies union—the National Association of Colliery Overseers and Deputies (NACODS). The 82.5% majority was in favour of strike action over the decision on 15 August by the NCB to stop the pay of deputies who refused to cross picket lines, opposition to pit closures and the breakdown of conciliation procedures. This significant display of support for the NUM's aims was followed by further talks between NACODS and the NCB in order to prevent the total shutdown of all pits, including the working pits, should NACODS decide to take strike action. The NCB is considering the NACODS' proposal that an independent arbitrator should decide on pit closures. The NCB has submitted counter-proposals to ACAS and are to meet NACODS again on Sunday 7 October. The NUM also met ACAS on Saturday 6 October. The outcome of all these talks is reality unknown but pressure is being built up on the NCB against the coal stocks are run down the border.

shall also see increased politicians come Labour and trade union the Irish people NUM to force it into Six Counties unprincipled compromise. That un-

On Wednesday 10 October—an all-Scargill and the NUM will facilitate and contempt of court allegations when the adjourned case against them resumes in court. Scargill has said that he is fully prepared to go to gaol and has repeatedly defied the court by stating that the strike is official and that the NUM retains the right to discipline any miners crossing picket lines. On Thursday 4 October the High Court backed down 'giving time for reflection' and adjourned the case. It cannot do this again without losing credibility. A decisive test of strength must soon take place.

A fighting working class movement

Every day that the miners' strike continues new lessons are learned. Old allies are exposed as treacherous enemies and new allies are found amongst forces that had previously been disregarded. A victory for the striking miners would fundamentally alter the character of the working class movement in Britain. For the striking miners will only have won through direct confrontation with the capitalist state, its police, its courts and its laws. A miners' victory would represent a defeat for the Kinnochs, the Murrays, the Basnetts and a whole generation of opportunists who have controlled and held back the struggle of the working class for decades. A whole layer of militant and victorious miners and their supporters will have learnt to reject the cringing subservience to bourgeois 'legality' and bourgeois 'democracy' that is the hallmark of these opportunists.

Because the striking miners have had to politically confront the divisions in their own ranks, they can understand the significance of political divisions within the working class movement itself. They now understand that when the likes of Kinnoch or Murray—'unity', it is a 'unity' that is proceeded only in the interests of the miner himself. Yes, the miners' strike ended the divisions in the labour movement but only to demonstrate the divisions for sions are necessary for monitor advancement of the working class safeguards. The miners' strike places d by a pro-rebuilding of the followed so movement on a fighting basis the eff-few weeks will provide a dec to a con-the miners and their leaders vage and determination hically ig-transformed the political exp thousands of people.

Victory to the miners

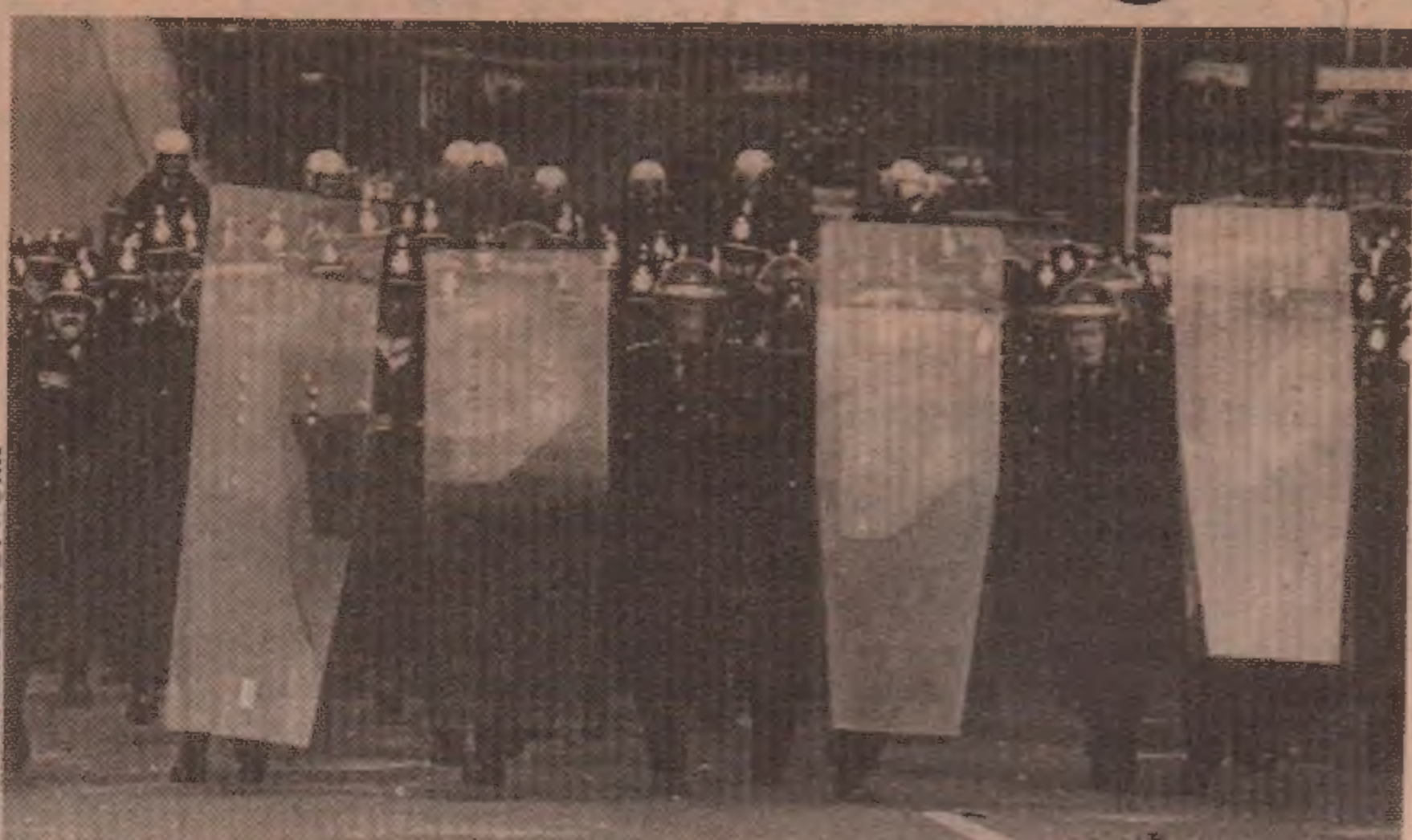
Olivia Adamson/David Reed

MINERS STRIKE

State authority challenged



MIKE ABRAHAMS/NETWORK



JOHN STURROCK/NETWORK

which criticised police behaviour. In his speech Scargill said 'Yes we've got violence—state violence against the miners'.

Throughout the week prior to the Labour Party conference endless challenges were thrown down to Kinnoch to condemn 'picket line violence'. Kinnoch was faced with a choice: either to make a concession to Thatcher, or to make a concession to the miners. Pressure at the Labour Party conference in fact forced Kinnoch to give the 'left' version of his argument against miners' violence in his major conference speech. 'I condemn all violence' he said '... the violence of the stone throwers and the battering ram carriers' (the miners) 'and the shield bangers and cavalry chargers' (the police). Kinnoch 'abhors' violence, he tells us, he wants nothing to do with it. However, he only uses this 'neutral' position as a stick to beat the miners. He is soon back into a familiar theme of the police being the 'meat in the sandwich'—between Thatcher and the miners. Unlike Scargill, whose very experience has told him that the police are a special body of armed men who exist solely to protect the interests of the capitalist state, Kinnoch has shown that he has much more to fear from the revolutionary violence of the oppressed than from the batons of the riot police.

Kinnoch's speech then proceeded to the question of legality: 'democracy is

ingly brutal role. The argument often takes opposing forms, ranging from describing picketing as being 'masterminded' violence, to being the product of some lunatic element. Leslie Curtis, Police Federation chairman, has accused the NUM of:

'a sustained campaign of out-and-out lawlessness which is without precedent in this country... It is even worse than the inner city riots of 1981 because they were not planned or masterminded, and the police were able to restore order and normality quickly...'

Eldon Griffiths, Tory MP who speaks for the police stated 'police will soon need to be equipped with plastic bullets to combat armed pickets firing airguns and other weapons'. On 28 September the so-called 'ambush' took place of 20 police in nine dog vans and a landrover near Silverwood pit, where the main injuries to police appear to have been caused by bites from their own dogs. Eldon Griffiths stated that this was 'a further and deadly serious escalation of the criminal violence being employed by lunatic or drunken fringes of Mr Scargill's private army...'

What these 'outraged' statements are laying the basis for is the now daily reality of policing on the picket lines. Not just once or twice, but day in, day out, riot police, horses and dogs are now used

representatives. The 'back-to-work' movement' is an organised conspiracy of NCB officials and the police against the NUM. A miner at Barnburgh pit near Doncaster recently admitted that he had gone back to work for a day. He had only made a casual enquiry to his pit manager when the police phoned him up several weeks later to say that arrangements had been made to escort him into work. When he began to object he was told that thousands of pounds had been spent on arrangements, so he eventually went along with them. He could only stomach one day.

Miners' resistance

The much-heralded 'back-to-work' day to coincide with the TUC Conference debate on the miners on 3 September failed to materialise. Since then in nearly every area massive battles have been provoked by police trying to get handfuls of scabs into pits. On 3 September 26 miners reported for work at Tilmanstone in Kent. The return was militantly resisted by pickets, pitted against hundreds of police, many from London. 30 arrests were made, including Malcolm Pitt, Kent NUM President. On that night, police prevented people in the nearby village of Elvington from leaving their homes after 8.30pm. The following day another 20 miners were arrested. Jack Collins, Kent NUM general secretary

schools closed as thousands of students flocked to the banned funeral of student leader Bongani Khumalo.

The uprisings have been concentrated in black townships in the heavy industrial areas around Johannesburg—Sharpeville, Soweto, Sebokeng, Boibatang and Evaton, but have spread further as the weeks progressed. In all these townships black youth have taken to the streets to destroy the means of their oppression—the beer halls, council offices, police stations, hostels and schools. Among their first targets are the homes of black policemen and the black stooge councillors who have introduced the increases in rent and other charges for essential services. The people have taken justice into their own hands—councillors in Sebokeng, Evaton and Lekoa, as well as the Mayor of Sharpeville, have all been killed. All 39 Soweto councillors have been in hiding.

ognised as legitimate in the imperialist nations, if not within South Africa itself.

Both the uprisings in the townships and the Durban Six have forced the apartheid regime to revert to their true character—a regime of fascist murderers and liars. The final reformist veil was lifted when it was announced that the four arms smugglers due back in Britain for trial next month, will, as a consequence of the Durban Six, now remain in South Africa, despite the apartheid regime's promises that they would return.

Victory to the ANC and SWAPO!

As a result of the upsurge of militancy against apartheid in South Africa, Botha's strategy for a new phoney constitution lies in tatters. Outside South

The low morale of the South African occupation forces leads to a warning about the increasing use of drugs, 'all forms of immorality' and,

'What is really disturbing is the damaging of military equipment by military personnel which could indicate sabotage, particularly if the negative attitude of certain conscripts is taken into account.'

On all fronts the apartheid regime has found it increasingly difficult to maintain its reformist cover and allow the imperialists to give open support to a 'democratic' South Africa. In Namibia,

South Africa

Telex to the international community from the Durban Six in the British Consulate

The inability of the British government to intervene in a country which is a major trading partner leaves a sour taste in the mouths of the oppressed people of this country particularly in view of a stated stand at the EEC Declarations.

Whilst we are not ungrateful for the unwilling hospitality extended to us at the consulate we still remain nonplussed with the British attitude in respect of detentions in general and the conditions of our stay here in the consulate in particular.

It is now clear in our minds that the British government will not mount opposition to the South African government's racial policies but will by diplomatic means aid and abet the system as it is designed to keep the majority of the people in perpetual subjugation, dehumanised.

Mrs Thatcher's refusal to see our representatives is an insult to the oppressed peoples of our land particularly in view of the fact that she very recently met Mr PW Botha.

A Gumede, G Sewpersadh, Billy Nair, Mewa Ramgobin, MJ Naidoo, Paul David

Botha's 'reforms' bite the dust

The news of these events has been broadcast in the world's press, ensuring that Botha is unable to disguise the contempt of black South Africans for his constitutional fraud, and for all the trappings of phoney democracy which aimed at stifling the masses. When, on 14 September, PW Botha was inaugurated as the first executive President under the new constitution, no amount of gloss could lend legitimacy to the ceremony. The reality of apartheid—the mass killings and detentions—could not be hidden. This was especially driven home by the six UDF and Indian Congress leaders who, the day before Botha's inauguration, had sought sanctuary in the British consulate in Durban.

Victory to the UDF!

On 7 September, the Natal Supreme Court ordered the release of seven leading UDF members who had been detained indefinitely, with 33 of their other comrades, before the 'Coloured' elections on 22 August. The Judge said that there were insufficient grounds for their detention. Within hours the apartheid regime had issued new orders for their detention, but by now they were in hiding. After five days on the run, Archie Gumede (Co-President of the UDF), Mewa Ramgobin (National Treasurer), Billy Nair, George Sewpersadh, MJ Naidoo (Natal Indian Congress), and Paul David (Release Nelson Mandela Campaign) walked into the 7th floor offices (above Barclays Bank) of the British consulate in Durban, seeking sanctuary.

The six have made it clear that they did not want political asylum, they expected the British government to provide them with facilities for talks with the regime. The British government has responded with what the six have described as 'a sophisticated campaign of subtle coercion', conducted by the consulate staff, to try to force them to leave. They cannot use the toilets in the corridor outside the consular offices because the British have refused to guarantee that they will be allowed back in. They have no mattresses to sleep on and they cannot use the telephone or a radio. Their relations had to start a hungerstrike in order to force the consulate to allow them visits. The British have continually refused to intervene with the South African government on their behalf.

Above all the action of the Durban Six choosing to enter the consulate of apartheid's main backer, has highlighted Britain's shabby double-dealing. Despite having signed an EEC Declaration calling for the release of detainees in South Africa only the day before the six men walked into the consulate, Thatcher and Co have refused to meet representatives of the six and have made their stay as unpleasant as possible. If it hadn't been for worldwide publicity the six would, no doubt, have been forcibly removed.

The Durban Six have forced the British government to make their position clear for the black people of South Africa to see—total support in practice for apartheid. Botha was welcomed to Britain in June on the grounds that Thatcher would use her influence to bring about reforms to apartheid. The representatives of black people in South Africa were refused any meeting.

Meanwhile, 'President' Botha is said to be furious about the publicity for the six, alongside the uprisings in the townships and the simmering dispute in the mining industry, which has overshadowed his 'big moment' and ended hopes that the new constitution would be rec-

Africa itself, what seemed to be a major victory—the signing of the non-aggression pact with Mozambique—has not reaped the rewards expected either.

Over the past few months the ANC has revealed that, despite the end of support from Mozambique agreed in the Nkomati Accords, it is still able to strike at the heart of apartheid. A limpet mine was discovered in Johannesburg Supreme Court, set to explode at the time of PW Botha's election as President. It was the 5th bomb in a fortnight. Power stations have been bombed, leaving the Transvaal and parts of Bophuthatswana without electricity. Other targets have been Soweto Police offices, Johannesburg Railway Police offices and two government buildings.

In the past week, apartheid Foreign Minister Pik Botha has had to put in overtime rescuing the pact with Mozambique. Since the signing of the Nkomati Accords the terrorist activities



A crowd of 3,000 residents in Sharpeville protested on the streets against rent rises

of the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) have increased within Mozambique, despite South Africa's assurances that it would withdraw support from the rebels. The MNR's banditry was beginning to call into question the very basis of the Nkomati Accords. The apartheid regime had to quickly step in. A 'peace' agreement has now been signed by all parties and South Africa has agreed to send in troops to 'help plough fields, rebuild roads and hospitals, and provide other assistance'. How long it will take for apartheid's army to revert to its true role as racist armed thugs will shortly be seen.

In Angola and Namibia, plans for the withdrawal of South African troops and the independence of Namibia are at a standstill. Meanwhile SWAPO is making headway and strengthening its position. Apartheid's army, on the other hand is facing serious internal crisis according to a secret document captured and made available by SWAPO. The minutes of a two day conference of apartheid's military counter-intelligence officers held in Windhoek in May this year reveal their deep concern that:

'SWAPO internally is organised on a wide terrain on different levels and possesses the infrastructure to collect information over a wide spectrum... it has an extensive intelligence network whereby the public... keep it informed of the movements of the security forces. Due to the links between SWAPO and the ANC, and international terrorist organisations, it must be accepted that SWAPO has available to it sophisticated sabotage equipment. There are indications that SWAPO can hide explosives on vehicles in an expert way.'

Solidarity in Britain

Now is the time when solidarity in Britain with the liberation forces in South Africa has to be at its most forceful. The apartheid regime is under pressure as a result of the courageous stand made by the black masses, the Durban Six and the UDF, who have made their protest out on the streets, sacrificing their freedom and in some cases their lives, to show the world their opposition to apartheid. In Britain the response has been minimal, even though the opportunity to confront British collaboration with apartheid in the case of Thatcher's refusal to aid the Durban Six has been paramount.

Now is the time to build the campaign to close down the racist South African embassy in London. In an editorial on Friday 28 September, the *Morning Star* called for precisely this, on the grounds that Botha had refused to return the four arms smugglers who have jumped bail. In an otherwise sound assessment of the necessity to send the South African ambassador packing and close down South Africa House, they make one fundamental error. They claim that the case of the arms smugglers and the refugees in Durban are not comparable because 'The arms smugglers have been charged, the refugees in the Durban consulate have not.' Whether the Durban Six are guilty or not is irrelevant. If they had been charged it would have been under racist laws in a fascist state. The South Africans never intended to return the arms smugglers to Britain, to do so would have been too embarrassing given their own involvement in the affair.

The case of the arms smugglers is just one more example of how the South African Embassy in Britain is involved up to its neck in spying, smuggling and

terror, and of how the British government lets them get away with it. The Durban Six have highlighted how Britain collaborates with apartheid. It is our job to mount the most determined campaign to support them and to close down the racist embassy. As the *Morning Star* says:

'Let us join together in the common struggle against these vultures who rob the workers here and in South Africa of the just rewards for their labours.'

The *Morning Star* is welcome to join us and other forces in the South African Embassy Picket Campaign.

Carol Brickley and Ruby Khan

STOP PRESS

As we go to press, it has been announced that three of the Durban Six, George Sewpersadh, Mooragiah Naidoo and Mewa Ramgobin, have left the consulate and have been arrested and re-detained by the apartheid regime. In a statement issued by the three remaining within the consulate it was said that the six had been continually assessing how best to challenge South Africa and 'its allies in the West' over Pretoria's determination to silence their organisation, the UDF.

When the three now in detention left the embassy they had hoped to be able to call a press conference, but security police (without identification) recognised them and dragged them out of a car. George Sewpersadh climbed on top of the car and was able to say that 'We have come out to test Le Grange's commitment to the rule of law'. It is said that they intend their action to challenge the recent decision of the apartheid regime not to return the 4 arms smugglers to Britain for trial next month.

KICK OUT WORRALL

South Africa's new ambassador Dr Dennis Worrall has become an instant darling of the British press. Interviewed on BBC2's *Newsnight* programme, a guest on Channel 4's *Face the Press*, sympathetically profiled in the *Observer* as the 'closest liberal' and in the *Sunday Times* as the 'acceptable face of apartheid' the English speaking academic-turned-politician is a slick propagandist whose job it is to win support for apartheid by presenting it as reforming from within.

Worrall was chair of the constitutional committee which drew up plans for the 'Coloured' and Indian election fraud. He is an architect of apartheid and bears direct responsibility for the hundreds of UDF supporters killed or imprisoned because they dared to expose his 'reforms'.

Last year, when he was apartheid ambassador there, the Australian Labour government condemned Worrall for his interference. In Britain he has been welcomed with open arms by the collaborators with apartheid. While Zac Yacoob, representative for the Durban 6 was shunned, Sir Geoffrey Howe and Baroness Young discussed with Worrall.

Worrall speaks here for fascism in South Africa. His initial success with the media indicates the rotten supine



role of the British 'free' press towards racial genocide. Would these same journalists have interviewed Dr Goebels as the acceptable face of Hitler's Germany? By giving Worrall a platform the British press is denying human rights to the true representatives of the South African people.

Andy Higginbottom

SECRET TRIAL

Roland Hunter (5 years), Patricia Hanekom (38 months) and Derek Hanekom (2 years) have been convicted for passing on information about the clandestine activities of the South African Defence Force (see FRFI 42). Their trial was held in secret to prevent further revelations of apartheid's orchestration of the MNR counter-revolutionary bandits in Mozambique.

DAVID KITSON UNBOWED

About 3000 people attended a series of eleven public meetings up and down the country featuring ex South African political prisoner David Kitson alongside the African National Congress, of which he is a member. The September speaking tour was organised by David's trade union TASS, together with the ANC. Sometimes fitting in a 14 hour programme of receptions and meetings in one day, 64 year old David Kitson showed his determination to see the barbaric apartheid system destroyed.

He explained in his speeches why the ANC in 1960 took up armed struggle, after peaceful protest had been met with armed terror by the racist regime. He emphasised that despite his release this year the true leaders of the South African people, including Nelson Mandela, were still in prison. We must fight for their release.

He explained the importance of British collaboration with apartheid and thus the need for solidarity in this country with the liberation struggle of the South African people. He pointed out the success of the 86 day picket of the South African Embassy in London in 1982, organised by his family and City of London Anti Apartheid Group, in winning improved conditions for himself and his comrades.

The numbers who turned out to hear David Kitson reflected the high esteem in which he is held—the respect for someone who has emerged from 20 years in a South African prison unbowed. But for the fact that most of the meetings were organised semi-privately many more people would have attended. Chris Fraser

Miners against apartheid

On Thursday 4 October four striking miners from Kent NUM appeared at Bow Street magistrates court. They had been arrested during City AA Group's six-day picket protest at Botha's visit to Britain. The miners had stuck posters saying 'Kent NUM say No to Botha' on the Embassy wall and coal had also landed on the Embassy steps. The original charges of 'insulting behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace' had been changed to a trivial charge under the Litter Act for Dave Cable and Les Sweeting, and for Keith Morris and Terence Cable a charge of 'without consent of owner or occupier fixing a paper on the building of South Africa House'. Keith and Terence pleaded guilty and were fined £10 each. Dave and Les pleaded not guilty and their case was dismissed because the magistrate said he could not rely on the accuracy of the police evidence, in other words the police were lying (again). Funny enough Commander Howlett (remember him!) of Cannon Row, had used this incident, amongst others, to justify banning pickets on the pavement outside the embassy. This isn't Howlett's lucky year. Liz Cherry

Sectarian Attack by AAM Leadership

The City of London Anti-Apartheid Group's Friday pickets of the racist South African Embassy are under threat once more, this time from the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) leadership. The Executive Committee (EC) has called on the group to 'cease organising activities outside the City of London'. South Africa House stands outside the City.



FRFI supporters on AAM demonstration to protest against the shootings in Sharpeville 14 September

Through these activities thousands of people have been drawn into active anti-apartheid activities. Through both City Group and SAEPC activities many people have joined the AAM for the first time, and City Group has built a record membership of 173. It is not surprising that City Group has become an attractive organisation to join and to support. The Friday pickets have become, in fact, a national focus for anti-apartheid activists, so much so that Eric Heffer called for support for them from the Chair of the Labour Party Conference. Richard Balfe MEP has commented that 'The City of London AA group has added a whole new dimension to anti-apartheid work, and they have put the Anti-Apartheid Movement back into the public eye'. FRFI wholeheartedly agrees with Richard Balfe and it is for this reason our supporters have been committed to help build the group.

Behind the letter, lies a whole campaign of rumours and innuendo against City Group. From the point of view of

building the AAM, none of the restrictions make sense. All are aimed at disrupting anti-apartheid work. There is nothing in the AAM constitution which lays down geographical boundaries for work or membership of local groups – the AAM EC are acting like the British police who try to prevent miners picketing in other areas. It would be quite absurd to confine membership of City Group to stockbrokers and similar inhabitants of the City of London. But that actually is not their intention, their intention is to destroy City Group. Local groups of the AAM should be open to all who find a particular group convenient for them. On the occasions that events have been organised beyond the City boundaries, it cannot be said that City Group members have found themselves competing with activists from other local groups. One member of City Group was recently told that she should not have been on the South Bank collecting signatures on a petition outside a miners benefit. The member of the EC concerned would have, presumably, preferred that nothing should have been done rather than it be done by a member of City Group.

The scandalous attempt to sabotage the SAEPC by instructing City Group to propose its dissolution can only be due to sectarian delirium. The fact of the matter is that the SAEPC succeeded in defeating the police ban and in attracting hundreds of people into a mass

experiences of the Militant group in the Labour Party, we all know what the accusation of 'Trotskyist' leads to in this period – a witch-hunt. The RCG has always been quite honest about its politics and about its relations with City Group. It fights to build an anti-racist and anti-imperialist movement in Britain and it works in and supports City Group amongst other AAM groups. What is at stake therefore is not just an attack on City Group as an 'over-active' organisation, but also an attack on the right of all opponents of apartheid, whatever their politics, to have their legitimate place in the AAM.

Malicious lies have also been circulated that the RCG is responsible for getting ANC members arrested. We challenge those spreading these rumours to come out and state their facts. There are no facts that support this, so we suggest that those responsible for these lies shut up.

The RCG and supporters of FRFI will be fighting at the forthcoming AGM of the AAM for a mass anti-imperialist perspective for the movement. We think those views not only have a right to be heard, but are an invaluable contribution to building the AAM as a democratic organisation.

FRFI totally rejects the type of sectarian attacks that are reflected in the AAM EC's letter. The powerful movement of the South African people demands a bigger response than small-minded manoeuvres. Now is not the time to worry about where activity is taking place, but to ensure that activity is taking place. British imperialism is not only responsible for the oppression of the South African people, it is also eating away at the leadership of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, who become used to the wheeling and dealing of bourgeois politics which leaves the British ruling class on the top of the pile every time. FRFI says that we have to stop the rot. We need to build the effective solidarity movement in Britain that the brave freedom fighters of Southern Africa and oppressed people in Britain have a right to expect.

**Defend City Group!
Build a mass anti-imperialist
anti-apartheid movement!**

South African Picket Campaign First Shots in the Campaign

Support is building up for the South African Embassy Picket Campaign (SAEPC) call to close down the South African embassy. The campaign will be launched at a public meeting on 9 October due to be addressed amongst others by Jeremy Corbyn MP and Camden Councillor Bob Latham, both arrested outside the embassy in July. Even before the launch many labour movement figures are indicating their support. At the Labour Party conference Tony Benn and Joan Ruddock (National Chairperson of CND) both signed the petition demanding the closure of the racist embassy. An editorial in the Morning Star (28 September) has also called for the closure of South Africa House.

The SAEPC was originally formed to defend the right to demonstrate outside the embassy after the police had plotted with South African officials to use the Vienna Convention to ban protests. The many activists who were drawn around the original struggle decided that the closure of the embassy should be the main focus of a further campaign to carry through the requests of the South African people for the total isolation of apartheid. The SAEPC has reorganised itself to prepare for a long term campaign that will need to root itself in the labour movement, amongst black people and the youth if it is to succeed. Apart from trying to win sponsorship from labour movement and progressive organisations and individuals, the campaign has got back onto the streets so that it can begin to involve as many people as possible. The first street meeting in Wood Green was a great success. Special guests from the City of London AA group singers added a new dimension

sion to the event. Many passers-by stopped to chat with campaigners, originally drawn by the singers. More street meetings are planned in Brixton and Notting Hill over the next month.

The campaign has organised itself into subgroups so that it can get down to the work of involving trade unionists and youth. A speaking tour of Labour controlled councils and trade union branches is being organised by one subgroup. Meetings are also being planned at factories and other workplaces. The youth and student subgroup was represented at many freshers events in the London colleges and the first SAEPC societies have now been formed. These activities are co-ordinated by regular open meetings for all campaign supporters (advertised on p14).

A major event is planned for 1 December, when the campaign will hold a festival to close down the embassy at which there will be films, workshops and lectures to make sure that all activists are thoroughly armed with the arguments for organising to isolate apartheid. The festival will culminate with a march on the racist embassy itself.

SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY PICKET CAMPAIGN

OUR CAMPAIGN MUST BECOME YOUR CAMPAIGN!

If you want to help close down the South African Embassy, don't delay in contacting the SAEPC. Fill up the form below and we will get back to you by return of post.

Name _____

Address _____

Organisation _____

Donation _____

Return to SAEPC, c/o BM Box City AA London WC1N 3XX

AAM Conference

MOTIONS CALL FOR ACTION

FRFI wants to see the Anti-Apartheid Movement built as a campaigning anti-imperialist organisation over the coming year. We want to see the AAM on the streets, in the unions and the rest of the mass movement organising to destroy all forms of collaboration with apartheid. The forthcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 28 October offers the opportunities for activists from all over the country to map out a way ahead for the movement in a decisive period of struggles in South Africa itself. FRFI is supporting resolutions (printed here) that can help put the AAM at the centre of building the most active solidarity movement possible. We are urging support for the resolutions as they provide a concrete way of building the movement we need.

Support for the campaign to close down the racist embassy will be a national focus in the struggle to isolate apartheid. This is already AAM policy and is supported widely in the progressive movement.

Fresh from our involvement in the successful South African Embassy Picket Campaign (SAEPC) we think we have lessons that we need to share with the entire movement. These are three. First we need to recognise the necessity of building a united AAM which supports all activities against apartheid. We are asking the AGM to correct the Executive on its sabotage of the SAEPC. Second we have learnt the need to link the struggle against apartheid in South Africa to the struggle against racism in Britain. Racism and apartheid are two sides of the same dirty imperialist coin. And third, we want to impress on the movement the importance of getting out on to the streets so that we can involve the people who really count.

Resolutions:

This AGM notes:

1 the victory of the South African Embassy Picket Campaign (SAEPC) formed in June 1984 to fight a police attempt to ban pickets outside the South African Embassy.

2 that during the campaign, the police made 161 arrests and imprisoned 5 people.

3 that thousands of people joined the campaign and were drawn into anti-apartheid activity.

4 that despite these facts, the AAM EC refused to support the SAEPC or the comrades who were arrested or imprisoned and in a statement on 11 July asked 'its members and supporters not to participate in this campaign'.

This AGM therefore:

1 condemns the AAM EC's divisive and sectarian actions and demands that the EC

retracts its 11 July statement.

2 congratulates the SAEPC, supports and sponsors its current campaign to close down the South African embassy and demands that a statement to this effect appears in the next issue of AA News.

Proposed by: Carol Brickley. Seconded by: Andy Higginbottom, Ruby Noorani, Eddie Abrahams, David Reed, Chris Fraser.

This AGM notes:

1 That the 1982 AAM AGM passed a resolution demanding the closure of the South African Embassy.

2 That following Botha's visit and representations made by the South African Embassy to the British government and police, the police decided to ban protests from outside the apartheid embassy.

3 That the police made 161 arrests, includ-

ing 3 MPs and imprisoned 5 campaigners.

4 That in the same week that 5 people were imprisoned in this country for peacefully demonstrating in solidarity with political prisoners in Southern Africa, the EC issued a statement calling on AA members not to support the SAEPC.

5 That following the SAEPC victory, all anti-apartheid organisations are again able to picket the embassy.

This AGM therefore:

1 Reaffirms the 1982 AGM resolution

2 Deplores the EC statement opposing the SAEPC and demands its withdrawal.

3 Congratulates the SAEPC.

4 Supports and sponsors its campaign to close down the South African Embassy.

Proposed by: City of London Anti-Apartheid Group.

This AGM believes that the struggle against apartheid cannot be separated from the fight against racism in Britain. Therefore this AGM resolves that in its work against apartheid and in solidarity with the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, the Anti-Apartheid Movement should work in close collaboration with other anti-racist organisations and wherever possible engage in joint action. Proposed: City of London Anti-Apartheid Group.

This AGM resolves that the AAM shall attempt to increase and broaden its support by:

1 working with youth, student, women's, gay, disabled, pensioners and black groups.

2 encouraging its members to organise street activities (petitioning, leafletting, speaking etc) with the aim of raising general consciousness about apartheid and of drawing more people into the movement.

Proposed: Nikki Rensten. Seconded: Richard Roques, Charine John, Ken Hughes, Jeremy Shepherd, Shane Carter.

VICTORY FOR ESTHER ANKELI

Esther Ankeli has won the right to stay in this country after a campaign which has lasted over a year. This victory has heartened all those fighting deportations and has shown that the way to win anti-deportation campaigns is by going out onto the streets. The Home Office acknowledged that it was the popular support Esther won which forced them to change their stand.

Esther came to Britain in 1977 to join her husband. He constantly abused and mistreated her, forcing her to leave him in 1981. The Home Office used this to try and deport her. Recently she lost her appeal against the deportation order. The adjudicator while agreeing that there was evidence of persistent cruelty against her by her husband, did not think there were any compassionate grounds for allowing her to stay. He required that compassionate grounds include 'an element of bereavement' or 'severe physical disability'. Esther had to suffer serious injury or the death of a relative before being granted the right to stay! During the course of this barbaric proceeding, Esther continued to publicly campaign against her proposed deportation. Then, recognising the support she had won, David Waddington admitted that Esther's deportation would be 'unsuitable'. In short, she had won her fight.

Esther now wants to thank everyone who supported her during her long campaign and has vowed to help everyone else under the threat of deportation. Anwar

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST GYPSIES

While many Labour MPs are jumping on the bandwagon and exploiting the GLC's Anti-Racist Year 1984, ex-Labour Party leader Michael Foot thought there was one ethnic group that it was quite safe to attack. Earlier this year Foot joined in the campaign to whip up public hysteria against gypsies when, desperate for a place to sleep for a week or two, they tried to camp on Hampstead Heath. Safe in his semi-detached house with his fat bank account, Foot thinks the Heath should be reserved for people like him to 'walk on'. Well there was more to the gypsies' camping on the Heath than you would imagine at first glance. The family which tried to camp there knew there would be an outrage, but felt it time to make a protest at the appalling conditions gypsies are forced into by local authorities.

Traditionally, gypsies live in caravans and move about the countryside earning their living by fruitpicking in the summer months. As farmers began the 'Pick-it-yourself' business gypsies turned to new ways of making a living - laying tarmac, scrap metal etc. This brought them to the towns and cities. To meet the gypsies' new housing needs in urban areas a 1960 Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act gave local authorities power to provide camp sites.

Whilst some local authorities did provide new sites, most continued to persecute gypsies driving them off land and refusing planning permission for the erection of new sites. The 1968 Caravan

Act while providing local authorities with an obligation to offer sites for gypsies 'residing in or resorting to' their areas, also gave them the power to evict gypsies camping without planning permission. Such legislation, while appearing to provide gypsies with rights, has in fact been used to further harass them. In 1977, Sir John Cripps' report 'Accommodation for Gypsies' resulted in costs being granted to local authorities for the construction of new camping sites. Yet by 1984, 40% of gypsies are still forced to camp on 'unauthorised' land and suffer the risk of arbitrary and violent eviction. Local authorities provide sites only for 40%, the remaining being on private ones.

A local authority site is however far from being a blessing by fortune. They are usually placed on useless land, near gas works or sewage disposal works, often in remote places where it costs a fortune to supply water, sewerage or electricity and where health and welfare services are nearly inaccessible. Tenants are forced to sign contracts forbidding them to have visitors without prior notice. Usually they are not even allowed to store scrap-metal, thus forcing them onto DHSS handouts.

The fate of families on 'unauthorised' sites is equally bad. Never knowing where they will be the next night, they have a hard time getting family allowances, registering with a doctor, keeping hospital appointments etc. A consequence of such discrimination against gypsies was highlighted in a 1983 Save The Children Fund report on 'Health of Travellers - Mothers and Children in East Anglia'. The report ends:

'Because of the lack of amenities and adverse environmental conditions travellers are more in need of health care than most of us, but get less. Without remedial action at the level of adequate provision, a long term improvement in health is unlikely.'

There is no sign of any 'remedial action' for gypsies, for whom housing is not the only sphere of discrimination. Facing prejudice, bigotry and discrimination, more and more gypsies are being forced out of their caravans to live in houses against their will in order to escape the hazards of persecution.

Anne Fury

Defend the Newham 7

On 7 April this year and during the course of the following week, 7 Asian youth in Newham were arrested after attempting to organise and defend themselves against racist attackers operating from the notorious Duke of Edinburgh pub. Facing conspiracy and an array of other charges, the youth appeared in court on Friday 14 September supported by a 60-strong picket including an FRFI contingent. The Newham 7 Defence Campaign won its first victory when conspiracy charges were dropped against 6 of the youth. However they all still face numerous charges of affray, criminal damage, carrying offensive weapons and threatening to kill as the police continue their campaign to criminalise black youth organising against racism. Such organisation has never been more urgent as the number and severity of racist attacks multiply in Newham and East London as a whole. Just two days after the 14 September hearing, racists again operating from the Duke of Edinburgh attacked 5 Asian youth one of whom sustained serious head injuries. The Newham Youth Movement organising the campaign has received significant support for black people's right to self-defence and at one of their public meetings, a Nottingham miner highlighted the similarities between the miners' and black people's struggle after stating 'I am evacuee of the police state'. For information contact the Newham Youth Movement, c/o PO Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7 (phone 01-555 8151).

LABOUR PARTY VOTES AGAINST BLACK SECTIONS

This year's Labour Party conference overwhelmingly rejected two motions, put by black members, calling for the formation of black sections within the party and for the election of black members to the NEC. It instead established a 'working party' on the question of racism in the LP, a traditional bureaucratic device to placate the defeated and sustain their hopes.

For nearly a year, black LP supporters have campaigned to establish black sections to organise themselves against the racism and discrimination they are subjected to. In June this year, a 300 strong National Conference of Black Sections voted in favour of black organisation in the party. The conference however preferred to follow the lead of Kinnock, Hattersley and Kaufman who even before June had declared their opposition to black sections. The Militant which postures as the 'Marxist paper for Labour and Youth', united with Kinnock and company and also argued against the motions.

The outcome of the conference debate is not surprising. The Labour Party is a racist organisation representing the interests of the traditional, racist and pro-imperialist organised British labour aristocracy. It is terrified by any sign of the oppressed organising themselves - in or out of the party. Whilst relying upon and cultivating the votes of the oppressed sections of the working class it systematically discriminates against black members within the LP - a fact underlined by many speakers in the debate. When in government it has organised the state's oppression of black people introducing and operating immigration controls, using the police against striking black workers and carrying out disgusting 'virginity tests'. Black organisation within the LP not only runs the risk of further exposing LP racism, it could also alienate the traditional working class vote for Labour.

Whilst FRFI supports the right of black people to organise within the Labour Party, the experience of the conference demonstrates that an effective struggle against racism must lead to opposition to this party. This is the lesson communists draw from the debate on black sections. Eddie Abrahams

Lord Scarman returns to Brixton

Three years after the official inquiry he conducted into the 1981 uprisings, Lord Scarman returned to Brixton in early September. During these three years unemployment in Brixton has doubled and for black youth it is 75%. In the first week of September Brixton job centre had 9,000 registered unemployed and only 130 vacancies. Discrimination against black people is so widespread that the local police Commander Marnoch himself said that if a black youth applies for a job he is 'best advised to put down his address as somewhere other than Brixton.' Meanwhile constant racist police harassment of the black community continues. Lord Scarman whilst expressing 'concern' at these facts was nevertheless happy that in Brixton 'The Queen's peace has been maintained'. This he thought was 'a big step forward from 1981'. Scarman who is currently making speeches about the miners' strike threatening 'the very ground upon which the foundations of our state are laid' is arguing that it is wrong to compare the 1981 risings with the miners' strike. This may be Lord Scarman's opinion, but the reality is that many miners, who face and resist police repression, recognise the common character of 1981 and the miners' strike.

John Pat - no racist cover-up!

On 28 September 1983, this 16 year old Aboriginal youth was found dead in a Roebourne police cell, Western Australia (FRFI 37 March 1984). 57 people witnessed his brutal arrest and testified against four police murderers. Yet, an all-white jury acquitted them. Other Aborigines were arrested, one spent three months inside, one was acquitted, one was fined A\$375 plus costs. Three are still awaiting trial!

The trouble started when Aboriginal Ashley James entered an off licence. While being served, two cops started insulting him with racial abuse ('We'll get you, you black bastard. We'll have you outside'). They 'got' Ashley outside. John Pat and others tried to pull him away. John was hit in the mouth, fell back, did not get up. Shortly after his brutal arrest, severely injured, John Pat died of brain haemorrhage at the police station.

On 23 May 1984, the inquest proved to be a complete cover-up (reminiscent of black British Colin Roach's case). Two months later, his stepfather died of grief.

Since then, intimidation prevails, with possible libel action against whoever dares to speak out. At a time when Western Australia's Labour administration should deal with the Aboriginal Land Rights, the Aboriginal community demands the reopening of the case and the dropping of charges, under a Royal Commission.

Colette Levy

Labour racists in Newham

The Newham Asian Association has been forced to cancel its anti-imperialist week (advertised in the last issue of FRFI) by the local Labour council. The programme was discussed with council officers and approved, the Association received a £2,500 grant. Subsequently, the council demanded that the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Sinn Fein speakers be removed from the list of speakers at the anti-imperialist rally. The Newham Asian Association refused to accept these racist demands and has now been banned from all council premises. Since the howling hyenas of the local gutter press have taken up the racist scent laid by the Newham Labour Party, all local venues have been closed to the Association. The true degree of the Labour council's racism can be seen from the fact that the fascist National Front is still permitted to meet on council premises.

Steve Palmer

AUEW President's anti-semitic racism

The pernicious racism which is deeply entrenched in the British labour movement found sordid expression at a recent meeting of the TUC's International Committee. Mr Terry Duffy, AUEW President referred to the secretary of the International Metalworkers Federation as 'a good little Jew boy'. Duffy apparently agreed to apologise but claimed he could not understand why anyone should object to the remark!

DHSS backs down over Viraj Mendis

The Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign (VMDC) has won a major victory against the DHSS. In late August they stopped Viraj and Linda's benefit in a disgusting attempt to starve Viraj out of the country. The campaign defeated this move. Viraj (known as Malik) is a supporter of FRFI and Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee and has lived in Britain for 11 years. He has been under threat of deportation since the Manchester police confiscated his passport on 26 May. He faces certain prosecution if deported to Sri Lanka because it is well known that he supports the struggle of the oppressed Tamil people.

Since the VMDC was launched on 24 June it has won considerable support. Thirty seven MPs have signed the VMDC petition and 17 political organisations have affiliated to the campaign. Our petition has over 7,400 signatures ranging from Anwar Ditta to Arthur Scargill. But as the campaign has won wider support it has also attracted attacks from the police and racists. The police have systematically attacked VMDC street meetings. On one occasion they attempted to stop VMDC members handing out leaflets on Market Street. Police have abused and taunted VMDC supporters, especially Viraj who was threatened with arrest by PC A1889 for 'Looking at him'. The police attitude towards Viraj has given strength to fascist elements who have attacked Viraj at his flat.

The DHSS join in

The DHSS in mid-August wrote to Viraj asking him to bring his passport to their office, claiming it was a 'random check'. After objecting to the racist nature of checks on black peoples' passports, Viraj informed the DHSS that he was unable to show them his passport, which seemed to satisfy them. When the next benefit payment for Viraj and Linda did not arrive, Viraj demanded an explanation. The spokeswoman said 'As you know Mr Mendis there has been a lot of publicity about your case and questions have been raised about your

right to claim benefit'. The DHSS did not say who 'raised the questions', whether it was the Home Office, the police, or someone else. One thing is clear - this was no 'random check'. The VMDC responded immediately by calling a picket of the DHSS. This was broadcast on Piccadilly radio and won the support of the Manchester City Council leader Graham Stringer who was appalled by this attack on Viraj.

The picket in fact turned into a victory celebration because the DHSS backed down and paid the money. Although this victory and that of Esther Ankeli must give cause for confidence, the attack on VMDC shows the determination of those who oppose us. This is why the campaign urgently needs the support of all anti-racists now.

Most recently the VMDC held a successful social evening which was addressed by Esther Ankeli, Viraj Mendis, the Kamal Kumar and Manjit Kaur Defence Campaigns. The Campaign holds regular street meetings, attends events and demonstrations organised by others struggling against oppression. We make an appeal for people to attend the committee meetings which are held every Sunday at 7.30pm, Committee Room 2, Manchester Town Hall.

VMDC, c/o Box 38, 434 Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN (tel. 061 273 5947)

Viraj Mendis

POLICE FILE



● No one would expect the police to serve communists, but it appears that some are now so, shall we say, *dry* in their views that even a pinko social democratic government under Mr Kinnock would be too much. Leslie Curtis, chairman of the police federation, had foot firmly placed in mouth when he questioned the loyalty of police to a future Labour government. One by one embarrassed chief supers and constables rose on flat feet to pronounce an even-listed attitude to HRH's loyal opposition. OK Leslie, so we think it but we never say it.

● One chief constable who probably won't be serving any government ('of whatever hue') is dear old Police File favourite Alf Parrish. Derbyshire's top rozzler now faces disciplinary proceedings following an inquiry into the lavish spending on his office (around £20,000). It now looks as if another of Alf's wheezes has been tumbled: it's said he used his *official* car and chauffeur for *private* engagements, and claimed expenses for hotel rooms that he *never* stayed in.

● Police are under attack from all sides this month. Tory MP Sir Anthony Berry says he had a *brainstorm* when he drove his car into a policeman to avoid capture on a drink driving charge, but perhaps it was a blinding flash of *inspiration*. Whatever the motive, Police File has no sympathy for either party...

● ...and in Sheffield, police are sorely regretting the failure of the local council to sell off the 34-strong dog team. When two dog-vans were overturned in a 'diabolical ambush' by Arthur's Army, the canine occupants promptly sunk their *fangs* into the ample rumps of the local filth.

● Altogether it's a hard time on the south Yorks picket line. Timid policemen try to keep up spirits by banging their riot shields. This primitive rite has now been *banned* by the chief constable, because it didn't look good on *television*.

● A trial in Manchester of three (former) policemen accused of beating up a market trader has been stopped because jurors were photographed when leaving the court. The judge said there was speculation that the photographer was connected with the *police*, and was attempting to intimidate the jury. What next? Diplock courts for the police?

YOUTH REJECT HESELTINE 'OPPORTUNITY'

In a fanfare of publicity a year ago, Minister of Defence Heseltine announced a new Youth Training Scheme for 16-17 year olds whereby 5,200 of them could join a branch of the armed services for a year (earning £25 a week with £10 deducted for food and lodging). Glowing from the Falklands victory, Heseltine and Thatcher fondly dwelled on the 'respect and admiration' in which the armed forces are held. Unemployed youth have, however, shown a rightful contempt of such patronising rubbish—only 500 out of the 5,200 places have been taken up! A sad disappointment for Heseltine. Olivia Adamson

Notes and Comments

Hospital cuts cause hospital deaths

The following statement was sent to FRFI by a health worker at Stanley Royd Hospital, Wakefield, Yorkshire where 28 elderly patients died in September during an outbreak of salmonella poisoning. At the end of the statement the writer warns that the deaths at Stanley Royd Hospital were not an isolated accident but were due to the conditions resulting from the government's murderous health cuts. This warning is entirely vindicated by four further outbreaks of salmonella poisoning at psychiatric hospitals in a number of areas. On 28 September at Carlton Hayes Hospital in Narborough, Leicester, 8 cases were reported; at Dykedar Hospital in Paisley, Scotland, there were 12 cases; at Rainhill Hospital, Merseyside 7 cases were reported. On 3 October at Whitchurch Hospital, Cardiff, there were 7 cases and an elderly woman died.

I am a health worker at Stanley Royd Hospital in Wakefield. During this month's outbreak of salmonella poisoning almost half the patients and a large number of staff were infected. Salmonella is an infectious form of food poisoning which produces symptoms of acute diarrhoea and vomiting, and in severe cases leads to dehydration and death. 28 patients have died altogether. Many elderly patients who were already incontinent and suffering from senile dementia, became bedridden with these added disabilities. At the same time, because of the infection, there were fewer and less familiar nurses to care for them.

On the local TV news on 3 September a Health Authority spokesman referred to measures taken to check the spread of infection. These were inadequate to deal with the infection *inside* the hospital. The real reason for the extent of the crisis was to be found in the way the hospital *normally* runs and has continued to be run during the time

of the infection. The hospital runs on a bare minimum of staff at the best of times. A thirty-bedded geriatric ward of highly dependent elderly people is commonly staffed by two or three nurses, of whom only one may be fully qualified. Of those on duty only one may be familiar with the patients, and that one could be well be untrained. It is the normal practice of the hospital to move nurses from ward to ward during a shift, in order to provide stand-in cover for meal reliefs, medicine rounds, bed rounds etc. Wards are often run by a nurse on relief who does not know the patients and who, therefore, has to rely upon trainee nurses for the whole shift. Some nurses may be expected to work on three wards in one day. Without this unwritten policy of relief nursing the hospital would, under normal circumstances, grind to a halt. So it is easy to see why the infection spread so rapidly and thoroughly. Staffing levels are so bad, and it is so difficult to provide even minimal nursing care, that it becomes impossible to contain infection.

Added to this the ancillary service of cleaners, porters, kitchen and laundry staff are having to survive by economising, threatened as they are with the loss of their jobs by privatisation. Cutbacks have already meant a real deterioration in the quality of food for the patients. The laundry could not cope with this epidemic. Patients have had to sleep on paper disposable sheets and infected linen has been piled up, inadequately bagged, in corridors outside the wards. All this has meant that patients and staff have been continually exposed to the risk of further infection.

An official decision was taken not to draft in extra nursing staff from other hospitals. Only nurses from Community Nursing and the Social Centre were drafted into the wards—probably about 20 at the most. *46 staff were off sick*. The decision seems to have been taken in order appear

as though Stanley Royd could cope. Nurses returned to work immediately after symptoms had subsided. They returned to geriatric wards where 'theoretically' they were not supposed to handle food or faeces. This was impossible given the low staffing levels. In other Health Authorities staff do not return to work until they have produced three consecutive negative stool specimens.

An administrator at the nearby general hospital (Pinderfields) suggested that any psychiatric patient found wandering in his hospital during the outbreak should either be locked up or immediately discharged. At Stanley Royd, repressive measures for patients are now being introduced in anticipation of a public enquiry. Patients are not allowed to mix from different wards, vital recreational and therapeutic facilities are closed.

The forthcoming enquiry will no doubt isolate a specific 'cause' of the epidemic and the deaths. And as far as the public and the health service will be concerned, that will be the end of it. Until the next time, the next place. It is about time managements stopped covering up the real reasons for the breakdown of a hospital suddenly facing a bit more pressure. So long as corners are cut in the service there will always be the risks of serious infection and runaway epidemics. Minor outbreaks of infection, staff sickness, inadequate patient care, are the daily reality for the staff and patients of Stanley Royd and similar hospitals throughout the country. This is the shame of Tory attitudes towards public health and those who look the other way. When a problem occurs with hospital resources already stretched to breaking point, routine events become major crises, many people suffer unnecessarily and some die. As long as the general public remain apathetic and are content to sit

back and watch inhumane governments destroy our health service, conditions will only get worse. As long as health workers are prepared to comply with appallingly low staffing levels, rather than organise to pressurise for more staff and better conditions for their patients and for themselves, conditions will only get worse.

In the nearby mental handicap hospital, Field Head, a severely mentally handicapped young man was kept in seclusion for one month because he was suffering from infective hepatitis. He should have been accommodated in a special room for this purpose which had an adjoining toilet, but he was said to have 'behaviour problems'. For this he was kept in one room with a commode, which he refused to use because it was not a proper toilet. He was left for long periods alone and he smeared the walls with faeces. Conditions were described as worse than a zoo. All this was officially sanctioned. The same hospital recently spent thousands of pounds installing mini-traffic light systems outside senior managers' offices to tell people whether to enter, try later, or go away.

Sir Jack Smart, Chairman of Wakefield Health Authority, is a Labour Councillor. He was knighted two years ago by Maggie Thatcher, presumably because he has been so good at implementing the cuts. Another Labour Councillor has called for the resignation of the entire Health Authority following this experience.

In general, nurse management and hospital administration are trying to keep the lid on the crisis, trying to keep their own jobs, and pretend things are not as bad as they really are. In turn nurses and other health workers are afraid to speak out for fear of victimisation. For that reason I know that I must send this statement anonymously.

40 SHIPYARD WORKERS GAOLED

In the same week that Arthur Scargill received a writ threatening him with gaol, 40 shipyard workers from the Cammell Laird yard at Birkenhead were gaoled in Walton Prison, Liverpool for one month, after defying a court order to end their sit-in. For over 13 weeks they had occupied an 80 foot high gas rig and destroyer in the yard in protest at the threat of redundancies. In a massive police operation on 1 October, 12 men who had occupied the destroyer were arrested, and police besieged the rig, equipped with grappling irons and climbing gear. They surrounded the rig with coiled barbed wire. On 3 October, the police's threat to bring the men down by force, led to the decision to abandon the sit-in. The men were taken straight to gaol.

The workers received little support from their 1,000 workmates, despite the fact that there are no more orders after the rig and the destroyer are completed. Pickets supporting the occupation involving workers from other shipyards, miners and many others, were not sufficient to prevent the police ending the occupation. Faced with the prospect of demonstrations and possible strikes in support of those gaoled, the Official Solicitor, last brought into an industrial dispute to act for the Pentonville Five, is now being used to bring an appeal on behalf of the workers in the High Court. Olivia Adamson

DEATH ON THE DOLE

A series of recent reports gives a grim insight into the social implications of the imperialist crisis.

The fate awaiting the NHS is outlined in 'Omega Health Policy', a report by Thatcher's favourite ultra-right think tank, the Adam Smith Institute. This recommends charging patients for accommodation, laundry, family planning and GP visits, to deter 'the 40% of people who are not ill.' District Health Authorities and all support services would be handed to private firms. The institute, chaired by Thatcher's ideological guru, Friedrich von Hayek, further proposes abolishing state pensions, disability, sickness and maternity benefits. Instead, private schemes would give new business worth billions to banks and insurance companies. A study on privatising prisons is also in preparation.

The British Medical Association shows NHS waiting lists up 20%—some people waiting 3 years for outpatient appointments. The Policy Studies Insti-

tute—remember their condemnation of the Metropolitan Police—reveal similar racism endemic in the DHSS. While claimants are treated as scroungers, the Child Poverty Action Group, in 'Benefit Take-up', show that fear of means tests and fraud squads leaves £900 million of social security unclaimed each year.

Two surveys describe how mass unemployment affects health. The Nuffield Centre show two-thirds of the long-term unemployed at risk of mental illness, and up to 30 times as likely to attempt suicide. Most starkly, a study of the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys shows the death rate for unemployed men 21% above average. Those on the dole are 75% more likely to die of lung cancer, and twice as likely to kill themselves. The poverty and stress of unemployment increases mortality for wives of unemployed men by 20%, and will kill an estimated 2,833 people in 1984.

Among these, count the young son of a striking miner, buried in a slag heap while picking coal. The DHSS refused his family a funeral grant. Could there be a more telling example of the inhumanity of capitalism? Dave Burton

BLACK'S WHITEWASH

The recently published Black Report on the Sellafield Nuclear Reprocessing Plant (previously Windscale) has turned out to be yet another cover-up for Britain's most notorious nuclear dustbin. The ten times higher than average rate of child leukaemia at Seascale, coupled with the disastrous leakage last November which contaminated a 25 mile stretch of Cumbrian coastline, has needed a great deal of whitewashing. Sir Douglas Black, when interviewed on BBC News, made the astonishing remark that any danger from Sellafield was a figment of the public's imagination. He said that fear of radiation was akin to fear of electricity a century ago, because it could not be seen. British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) the chairman of which is aptly named Mr Con Ailday, is doubtless pleased with the report which repeats their own line that Sellafield 'can not be the cause of reported excess leukaemia in nearby Seascale.'

Meanwhile more and more disturbing facts are emerging which even the nuclear comen will find difficult to brush aside as coincidence. A recent survey has revealed that the gull population along that stretch of coastline has fallen from 12,500 breeding pairs in the 1960s to 1,500 today. The gulls

have, for some strange reason, been unable to reproduce in 2 out of 3 years. Sea fish caught in the Irish Sea have been found to contain 20 times the safety limit of radioactivity.

People living in the area of Sellafield have been subjected to the most ridiculous 'advice', by BNFL and Government spokesmen. They have been told to 'soak shellfish overnight', as this apparently reduces their radioactivity. Patrick Jenkin, Environment Secretary, declared the contaminated coastline to now be safe for the public, provided they, 'did not pick things up.' Sellafield discharges one million gallons of nuclear waste per day into the Irish Sea, which has turned it into the most radioactive stretch of water in the world. Public outcry, particularly since the spillage last Autumn, has forced BNFL to say it will 'investigate' ways of reducing the discharge, even though 'there is no rational cost-effective basis for doing so.' In Blackpool, 50 miles away, there have been 40 reported cases of the cancer Myeloma in the last 20 months. A 5 year survey by a pathologist at a Blackpool hospital shows that the pattern of incidence of the disease coincides exactly with the settling of the large radioactive cloud over the Fylde region in 1957, after the stack-fire accident at Sellafield.

On the other side of the Irish Sea, the alarm is also being raised. A recent study by two Dublin doctors shows an abnormally high incidence of Downes Syndrome found amongst babies born to women in Dundalk who were schoolgirls at the time of the 1957 stack fire accident. As these alarming facts continue to emerge, BNFL seems incapable of drawing the obvious conclusions—but then, as loyal servants of a system which cares only for profit, maybe they just don't want to. Helen Anderson

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

The political realities of the miners strike forced their way into the Labour Party Conference and showed once again which side of the class fence the Labour Party stands. Whilst Arthur Scargill was under threat of imprisonment for so-called contempt of court, Neil Kinnock was making speeches about the need to uphold the law and condemning pickets fighting for their jobs and communities against the paramilitary police force. Yes, Neil Kinnock differs from Margaret Thatcher in that he condemns 'all violence...without fear or favour'. Thatcher stands for her class—the

ruling class—while he sits on the fence and betrays the working class.

Labour voted for a non-nuclear defence policy and the withdrawal of cruise and Trident, but continued membership of the imperialist NATO alliance. As Alex Kitson of the Executive Committee of the Labour Party put it: 'The cost of Trident would seriously damage Britain's conventional defence forces.' That would never do as the next Labour Government would need them in the North of Ireland—once again the Labour Party voted overwhelmingly against the withdrawal of troops.

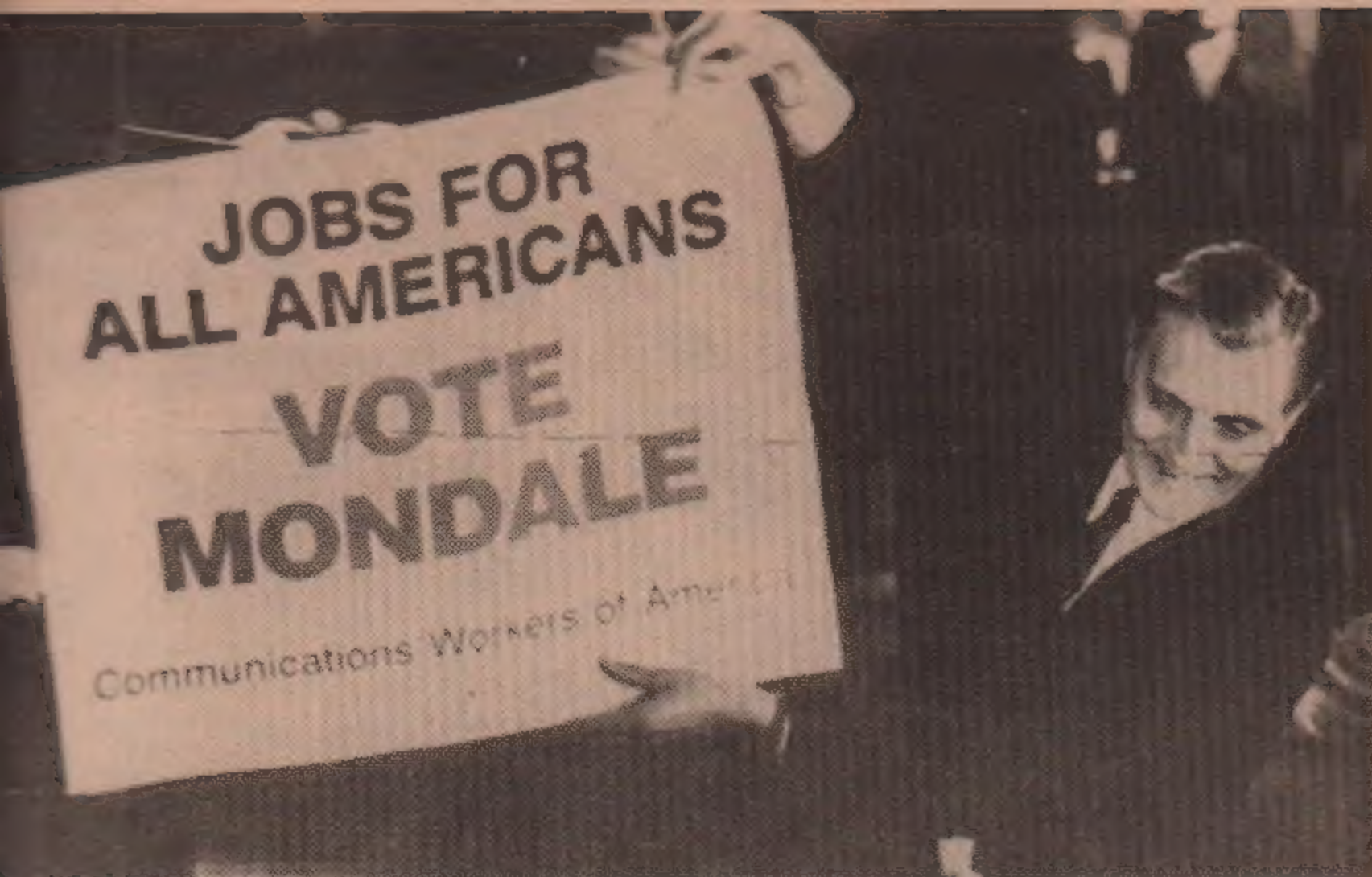
The conference did however support a resolution declaring total opposition to the non-jury Diplock courts, opposition to the use of paid informers, demanded the repeal of the PTA, and an end to the sexual harassment of women prisoners by strip searches. This was carried against the advice of the National Executive. Also carried against the advice of the NEC was a resolution demanding the cutting of all economic, military and diplomatic links with South Africa. What these resolutions would mean in practice, taking the record of past Labour governments as a guide, is absolutely nothing.

There was no debate on racism and the oppression of black people in Britain, only on whether the Labour Party should set up separate black sections. This proposal has shocked the leadership who are totally opposed to black people organising themselves against racism within the Labour Party. The proposals for separate black sections were overwhelmingly defeated, with significantly only the NUM out of the trade union block votes voting in favour of the proposal.

The Labour Party Conference showed once again that the Labour Party has nothing to offer the oppressed in Britain. It also showed that it has nothing to offer to those workers from the organised Labour movement forced to fight to defend their living standards and communities. Bob Shepherd

NUCLEAR TAXATION PROBLEM

The US Internal Revenue Service has applied itself at length to the problem of tax collection in the event of a nuclear war. In a recently published report it reluctantly concedes that taxpayers who are 'inconvenienced' by the nuclear holocaust will have to be excused the interest and penalties normally incurred through filing their tax returns late. JW



MONDALE'S BID FOR GLORY

Reagan's poll ratings soar and the Wall Street Journal smirks 'Over the last four years the nation has somehow become comfortable with the idea that someone of Ronald Reagan's ilk could be president of the United States'. Behind this mock bemusement the US bourgeoisie continues to swell Reagan's campaign funds, and their press cheer him along the trail of balloons, birthday cakes, folksy tunes and homely tales of what a good guy God is. Desperately trying to turn the tide of chauvinism his way, Democratic Party candidate Walter Mondale has chimed in with his own brand of flag-waving home-team pride at the exploits of US imperialism.

Let anyone should doubt it Mondale insisted 'I've been very condemnatory of the Sandinista government'. So criti-

cal indeed that should the Nicaraguan people attempt to protect themselves against CIA orchestrated air attacks by

deploying defensive aircraft provided by the Soviet Union, Mondale would insist 'that the Soviets have to get out of there and it means we have to take such steps to bring about that result'. By such steps Mondale means 'quarantine', which translates as economic and military blackmail. Fifty thousand El Salvadoreans butchered in four years means nothing to Mondale, US imperialism has set its course and he would stay on it, 'I believe we should be supporting Duarte, including military assistance.' And when the military supplies and advisers and 'quarantines' fail the imperialist troops go in, and so Mondale supports the US invasion of Grenada, 'I would have used it to go in there to protect American lives, I would have used American power to protect them'.

US Zionists are a major prop to the Israeli state and Mondale is quick to sniff a chance to court their vote by preying on Reagan's misfortunes: 'half the problem in Lebanon' was that Reagan sent 'not enough troops to get the job done... If we're not careful the same thing is going to happen in Central America.' As more US troops were killed in Beirut this September Mondale leaped in, accusing Reagan of letting Lebanese 'terrorists humiliate us and push us around and kill our people'. Pleased with his opportunism Mondale struck out: the Zionist settlements on the occupied West Bank are legal; no I will not

talk to the PLO; and yes we should transfer the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The Democratic Party is every bit as stained with the blood of the oppressed as is the Republican Party: they devised the 1961 Cuba invasion debacle, escalated the Vietnam war, drafted US military advisers into Central America, and have provided the means for Israeli fascists to slay Palestinian and Arab peoples. Champions of these barbarities now advise Mondale alongside rogue Republicans, thus his senior military adviser is the former Defence Secretary James Schlesinger who was sacked by Republican President Ford for openly advocating a pre-emptive first nuclear strike against the Soviet Union. So it is that Mondale can state 'we stand together as one, as Americans, behind our President when he negotiates with a foreign power', when Reagan met with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko.

Bellicosity in foreign policy is now matched by its counterpart at home. Seeing the USA's largest trade union, the Teamsters, backing Reagan, Mondale has offered the corrupt, violently anti-communist union leaders the prospect of savage import restrictions to keep their vote in the Democratic fold. Mondale's promise of a 50% cut in steel imports, if elected, would be a terrible blow against the Latin American nations struggling to earn currency with which

to repay the imperialist banks.

The still voice

The Democratic Party has temporarily managed to still the voices that were raised around Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow Coalition: voices that clamoured for the rights of the poor in the USA and an end to imperial adventures. Like Foot and the Labour Party over the Malvinas, Mondale and the Democratic Party now vie for the respect of the bourgeoisie, presenting themselves as would-be ministers that can be trusted to act in their interests. This they do with complete contempt for the mass of world opinion and the working class of their own nation. One third of the US population depend upon state benefits, a quarter of US children under six rot in poverty, over half the black youth are unemployed. For these people the dizzy frenzy of the US political system offers no attractions. Participation in US elections has steadily shrunk over twenty years: just over half those registered voted at all in 1980, Reagan got 26.2% of their votes, 30 million eligible voters are unregistered, half of all black people eligible are unregistered. To Reagan and Mondale such people are just so many guns for hire to imperialism. It is their voice that must one day rise above the roar of the circus.

Trevor Rayne

GRENADA: ANNIVERSARY OF INVASION

On 19 October 1983 Maurice Bishop, leader of the Grenadian revolution, was killed. Upon the anniversary of his death Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! salutes the memory of this great son of the Caribbean peoples, inheritor of their most glorious traditions of combat against the mortal foes of slavery, colonialism and imperialism. Maurice Bishop and the revolution he led were an inspiration to all the oppressed people of the Caribbean. His loss is a terrible blow.

On 25 October last year the mighty Moloch of US imperialism descended upon Grenada. Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! remembers with renewed fortitude the magnificent sacrifice made by the Cuban workers who gave their lives fighting at the side of the Grenadian people, fighting for all the poor

and oppressed people in the world, fighting for the small nations black-mailed by imperialist economic and military might, fighting for the future.

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! supporters attended a picket of the stooge Grenada High Commission on 20 September to demand the release of Chester Humphries, a Grenadian trade unionist and political detainee, who launched a hunger strike in protest at the inhuman treatment meted out by his captors, and to demand the removal of all occupation forces from Grenada. Copies of Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! were eagerly bought. We consider it an honour to follow the tradition of Maurice Bishop and the Cuban martyrs. Hands Off Grenada!

Trevor Rayne/John Strawson

Duarte's democratic facade for terror

El Salvador's President Napoleon Duarte is cultivating for himself the image of a populist friend of the people. The war between the country's oppressed classes and its US dependent ruling class he describes as 'the poor killing the poor' and denounces the state, over which he presides, as 'uncivilised' and 'incapable of prosecuting the criminals' who have murdered over 40,000 workers and peasants.

In bourgeois politics it is common for the criminal to dress in the clothes of an honest man in order to more effectively carry out his criminal actions. Along with a limited control on the death squads operating in the capital San Salvador, President Duarte's new image is designed to win over to his government the local middle class, to fob off opposition in the US to increased US military aid to secure international respectability for the regime whilst isolating the FMLN. By these means, Duarte hopes to prosecute his bloody war against El Salvador's workers and peasants more effectively and with less international

criticism and restraints.

While Duarte was making his radical speeches, the US trained Atlacatl Brigade in July and August carried out a series of vicious massacres of unarmed women, children and elderly people in Cabanas and Santa Lucia provinces in what is now a systematic strategy to terrorise the people into submission. Thousands of peasants have been killed in indiscriminate air and ground raids and hundreds of thousands have been forced to flee their homes.

Meanwhile the Reagan administration continues to step up its military aid which rose from \$81.3m in 1983 to

\$196.6m in 1984. Having failed to defeat the FMLN on the ground, the US is increasingly relying on massive aerial bombardment as a tactic against the FMLN forces. By the end of this year, El Salvador's Huey helicopter fleet, critical in the counter-revolutionary war, will have increased from 18 in January to 50. Transport planes are being equipped with .50 calibre Gatling guns. Since the beginning of this year there have been 158 air strikes against FMLN strongholds in Chaletenango, Morazan, Cabanes and Guazapa in an attempt to disrupt and destroy revolutionary support structures and supply lines. The army, which has grown five fold in three years to 40,000, will be increased by another 8-9,000 soldiers. Duarte and his masters in the army and the US administration remain, as ever, committed to the defeat of the revolutionary forces of the FMLN. Their prospects, however, are dim indeed. Since Duarte took office in June, the FMLN has inflicted 2,000 casualties on the enemy army and has not been dislodged from any of its positions.

Eddie Abrahams.

Chile

'soon they'll see.... when the workers take power'

4 and 5 September saw the largest protests this year against Pinochet's dictatorship. Nearly all sections of the population including the independent lorry drivers and shopkeepers mobilised against the regime. However the copper miners continued to work. The protests which included strikes, demonstrations, student boycotts, and street fighting in working class areas were met with unrestrained savagery by the police. Nine people were shot dead including French priest Andre Jarlan. A peaceful protest in Santiago's central square with many of the opposition political leaders present was attacked by police using water-cannon, clubs, and dogs. Some youths from the shanty towns who were caught by the police were scalped, and others were severely burnt by being roasted over burning barricades.

In unison with the popular protest armed actions also took place. In Santiago at least 14 bombs were detonated, plunging parts of the city into darkness, and destroying electricity pylons, buses and public buildings. Railway lines to the south were cut, and a bridge 300 miles south of the capital was blown up.

Following the murder of Andre Jarlan, a march carrying his body to the centre of Santiago from the working class suburb of Victoria (where he lived and worked) became a demonstration against the regime. 4,000 marched along the route chanting: *Soon they'll see! Soon they'll see! What it's like when the*

workers take power! and Who will avenge him? The people! In all 10,000 people congregated at Cathedral Square to honour the people's priest. It was the first time since Pinochet took power that a march from a working class suburb to the city centre has taken place.

The protests of 4 and 5 September were the first mass protests since May. The National Workers Command (CNT) dropped its plans for a general strike in July because key Christian Democrat unions would not support the action. However the Democratic Alliance (AD) which includes the Christian Democrats, and the Popular Democra-

tic Movement (MPD) and the CNT organised a united mobilising committee for the September protests—the National Protest Command (NPC). The formation of the NPC represents an important advance for the democratic movement.

In 1983 the AD and the Christian Democrats would not negotiate with the MPD and tried to use the mass protests of that year to reach their own agreement with the military junta. However the failure of talks with the junta, the continuing economic crisis—Chile's foreign debt is nearly 20 billion dollars and unemployment is 30%—and the intransigence of Pinochet even refusing to legalise political parties, have forced the middle class and the Christian Democrats towards greater militancy. But some sections of the junta are trying to split the new found unity. General Mattei favours the legalisation of some parties as long as they define 'themselves clearly over the problems of Communism'. In contrast Pinochet has promised a regime of mass terror against the opposition if the protests continue.

The unity of the opposition will surely thwart any of Pinochet's attempts at mass terror and be a major step forward to total victory.

Nigel Doyle

NICARAGUA - IMPERIALIST MANOEUVRES

The Reagan administration's response to the 4 November Nicaraguan elections is a sharp reminder that the imperialist ruling class will only tolerate democracy if it is bourgeois democracy in which the bourgeois and reactionary classes have power. The Nicaraguan elections will ratify a popular democracy in which workers and peasants have real power and the rights of the exploiters and servants of imperialism are restricted.

Despite the fact that bourgeois parties are permitted to freely participate in the elections, the US administration and its Nicaraguan agents are demanding their postponement. The main bourgeois coalition, the Democratic Co-ordinating Committee (CDN) is boycotting the elections because the Sandinista government refuses to negotiate with the CIA-organised counter-revolutionaries of the FDN. The FDN recently exposed its fascist colours when it was revealed that in a period of just 6 months it had collected \$10m from private US corporations and from governments such as Argentina, Israel, Guatemala and Taiwan.

The US government is also seeking to destroy Nicaraguan efforts to bring

peace to the region. In September, the Sandinista government agreed to sign the Contadora peace plan requiring the removal of all foreign military personnel and bases from Central America. Despite repeated US demands for Nicaragua's signature to this plan, US Secretary of State immediately denounced the Sandinista's agreement and demanded changes to the plan!

These imperialist manoeuvres are designed to prepare pretexts for a US invasion of Nicaragua. At the UN General Assembly on 2 October, Daniel Ortega exposed US invasion plans declaring:

'The mercenary forces of the CIA and the Pentagon are already concentrated in the areas bordering Nicaragua in Honduras and Costa Rica. Also ready are the US forces that would be used for bombings, troop landings and direct incursions into Nicaragua.'

He declared however, that:

'...the Nicaragua people—barefoot, ragged and with empty stomachs—are going to fight to the end.'

Eddie Abrahams



The People's Republic of South Yemen is a small Arab nation of 33,600 sq km on the southern coast of the Arabian peninsula, and has a population of 2m. It was born 17 years ago on 29 and 30 November 1967, following a bloody four-year guerrilla war. 129 years of British colonial rule was ended after a heroic struggle by the people of Aden and the hinterland of South Yemen against the military might and terror of the British armed forces and a succession of British-imposed schemes and manoeuvres designed to deny the people their right to self-determination. The crucial phase of the armed struggle for independence (1963-1967) took place when the British Labour Party government headed by Harold Wilson was in power. It was under this government that the most sustained repression and torture of Adeni and Yemeni patriots fighting for independence took place.

REPRESSION AND TORTURE

THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY AND THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE IN SOUTH YEMEN

Labour Party series

In May 1983 FRFI began a series of articles exposing the Labour Party's criminal record when in office in defending British imperialism's interests against oppressed people throughout the world. This issue continues with the British Labour Party and the Liberation Struggle in South Yemen. Past issues have contained articles on:

- The Labour Party and Zionism FRFI 29 (May 1983)
- The Labour Party and South Africa Foul Words! Foul Deeds! FRFI 30 (June/July 1983)
- The Labour Party and Vietnam FRFI 31 (August 1983)
- The Labour Party and Kenya Racism and Savagery FRFI 32 (September 1983)
- The Labour Party and Greece FRFI 36 (February 1984)

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ish imperialism nexes Aden

1839 the British Crown annexed the territories initially for use as a military trading post. The occupation was fiercely resisted by 1,000 local warriors, who were only subjugated after three years of fighting. Aden possessed a fine natural port and was also prized by the British for its unique strategic position. It was able to service British trade routes to India and the Far East and was valued for its role in developing British commercial interests in the Middle East. The economy of Aden became utterly dependent on the fortunes of the imperial money and trading markets. In the hinterland areas the British reinforced the pre-existing tribal divisions to avert inter-tribal disputes. Literally hundreds of treaties were concluded with puppet Sheikhs, Amirs and Sultans who acted like tyrannical feudal barons. Up to 1940, the British spent not a penny on any development in the hinterland where disease and poverty were rampant. Yet millions were spent arming and equipping the tribal 'leaders'. In the rural areas of the hinterland, the land and the water sources of irrigation were owned by these feudal leaders. The majority of peasants existed in a state of perpetual bondage to them, and were forced to hand over to these exploiters between one fifth and two thirds of the harvest. When the British left in 1967 the country had 3 Yemeni doctors and 950 hospital beds for 1 million inhabitants. Abdul Fattah Ismail, a leader of the vicious National Liberation Front (NLF) commented in 1970:

'We have no schools, in the rural areas in which to educate our children. We find no hospital to treat our sick. And when we ask ourselves why, we find that our enemy British imperialism wanted to keep our people underdeveloped, ignorant and disorganised, so they could not resist or throw off the yoke of imperialism.'

Any resistance to the British colonialism did arise, the British resorted to 'aerial supervision' — the bombing of villages and homes as a brutal form of collective punishment.

After the Second World War, Aden gained a new importance for British imperialism. After important bases were lost in Palestine and Egypt, the Defence White Paper envisaged Aden and Singapore as major military bases. In 1960 Aden replaced Cyprus as the Headquarters of the British Middle East Command. Installations for military building in Aden expanded rapidly — Khormaksar RAF station was soon the busiest in the world. In 1964 a huge oil refinery had been built to replace the Abadan refinery nationalised by the Mosadeq government in Iran in 1951. Aden had become a massive military base protecting British imperialism's interests in the oil-rich Persian Gulf and throughout the Middle East.

As the British base grew, so did the Adeni working class who very quickly became radicalised. In March of 1956, workers fought 33 strikes involving 10,000 workers. In the second half of 1956, 18,000 workers participated in 44 strikes. By 1959/60 strikes began to paralyse the operations of the BP refinery. The British responded by arresting and jailing labour leaders, deporting nationalists and eventually banning strikes. The Adeni working class while fighting for its own economic interests was in the vanguard of the struggle against British colonialism. They mobilised a movement to boycott the 1955-1959 bogus and gerrymandered legislative Assembly elections which disfranchised the majority of workers in Aden. It was rightly seen as a stooge imposed by the British against the interests of the Yemeni people. The Legislative Assembly was used to ratify the formation of a puppet 'Federation of South Arabia' merging the hinterland, dominated by reactionary, pro-imperialist Sheikhs and Amirs, with Aden. The manoeuvre designed to isolate and

set scenes in Aden's Crater district. 1, a banned procession is blocked by the British Army; 2, the procession breaks up; 3, a grenade is thrown; 4, guerrillas open up on British Army with sniper fire.

encircle the nationalist movement in Aden sparked off massive anger and led to the formation of the National Liberation Front (NLF).

The National Liberation Front

The nationalist movement gained further impetus from the September 1962 revolution in North Yemen which deposed the pro-British Imams. Militant nationalists from South Yemen launched the NLF in June 1963 to open a front in the south to combat British backed counter-revolution against the Yemen Arab Republic of the North. The NLF was composed of Adeni workers, activists of the Arab Nationalist Movement, army officers and revolutionary youth and students. As the most consistent fighters for national liberation, the NLF drew its support from and represented the interests of the Adeni workers and the mass of poor and downtrodden Yemeni peasantry.

On 14 October 1963, in the Radfan mountains, the NLF launched its first armed attacks against British imperialist forces in what was to be a four year long heroic struggle.

The British responded by encircling the Radfan area with huge numbers of troops who terrorised the Radfanis and burnt their crops. 1,000 pound bombs were dropped on villages in what became a six month counter insurgency campaign. Denis Healey, who was to become the Labour Minister of Defence the following year, commented that the 'troops have done their job magnificently'.

The Labour government in power

As the liberation struggle in Yemen entered its decisive phase, the Wilson Labour government was elected in October 1964. The Economist remarked at the time:

'Aden will be the first test by which the Arabs decide whether Mr. Wilson's Government is truly of a new colour.'

In a matter of days the intentions of the incoming Labour administration were clear. In November, Healey stated that the policy of the government was 'to retain the base (Aden), in agreement with the Government of South Arabia, for so long as it is required to serve the interests we have in common.'

The pre-election claims of the Labour Party to promote 'friendship with the Arab world', were only for the gullible. The Labour government had no intention whatsoever of departing from Aden — they were as committed to defending the interests of imperialism as they had always been. One of its first acts, in the words of new Prime Minister Harold Wilson, was: '...preparing for the inevitable martial take over, suspension of the constitution and a declaration of a state of emergency'.

The Labour government did not release the hundreds of political detainees, did not repeal the repressive labour laws banning strikes and did not allow the Adenis their rights to self-determination. The Labour government *did* step up repression to new frightening and brutal levels. Firstly the government appointed a new High Commissioner, Sir Richard Turnbull, who in the 1950s had led the repression against the Mau Mau revolution in Kenya. In 1965 the NLF was outlawed — suspected members could be detained without trial. Anyone convicted of assisting the NLF could receive ten years imprisonment. Finally, as was to happen in Ireland, trial by jury was abolished.

Whilst stepping up repression against the working class and peasant forces, the Labour government was prepared to collaborate with feudal and bourgeois forces which it hoped to use as agents of its rule. It tried to cultivate political links with FLOSY (Front for the Liberation of South Yemen). FLOSY represented the Adeni bourgeoisie and the Sultans and two of its leaders Al-Asnaj and Makawi were later to emerge as bitter opponents of the revolution in South Yemen.

Labour government directs torture

The NLF however rapidly increased its

base of support and was now capable of mounting attacks in Aden itself which were devastating for the 17,000 British soldiers both in casualties and morale. The NLF increased the number of its armed operations from 36 in 1964, to 286 in 1965, 510 in 1966 and 2,900 in 1967! By 1966 the whole of the Arab Special Branch had been assassinated by revolutionaries. Faced with the complete hostility of the people, the British could only obtain information through interrogation and torture. Reports of brutality and torture emerged as early as January 1965 — this was only *three months* after the Labour government came into office! Suspects were interrogated at Fort Morbut, where violent beatings and torture through the use of electrodes, the injection of drugs and disorientation techniques also took place. The detainees were then sent on to the regular prison at al Mansoura.

A British soldier, Corporal George Lennox, who served in Aden in 1964 and 1965 has described what he witnessed at Fort Morbut Interrogation Centre:

'Nearly every night after the state of emergency was declared and after a lot of suspects were being taken in, we used to hear, sitting in our Corporal's Club drinking, a lot of screaming and shouting; really disturbing screaming, as if it was associated with someone being hurt... it was a common thing for us just to laugh and joke about it. "There's another cunt getting fucking done in"... I can remember one particular guy from the — Regiment — who was a boxer for them. And he used to come in and boast in the morning. He used to come in and say, "Yeah, we thumped this wog last night and he's really screaming..."'

On another occasion Lennox witnessed a beating:

'...I watched three soldiers... drag out an Adeni detainee from the exercise yard. There was blood coming from the man's mouth and he was dressed only in a loin cloth round his waist. The three soldiers, standing about five yards apart began, in turn, to hit the Adeni. The first soldier was using a five-foot-long broom handle and beating the man about the head and prodding him in his midriff and genitals. He was then passed to the second soldier who hit him with a tin mug commonly used by the infantry. The third used his fists. The unfortunate wretch fell unconscious twice. He was then revived with a fire hose only to be beaten again.'

Just as was to happen in Ireland, the charges that the British were routinely torturing detainees was at first pompously denied. Observers from the International Red Cross and Amnesty International were refused access to detainees, although the latter published a report in September 1966 detailing brutality by the British. When Corporal Lennox spoke to the *Sunday Times* newspaper about the atrocities he had witnessed, he was himself detained, tortured and expelled from the British Army. Finally the Labour government appointed its own 'inquiry' into the torture allegations. The subsequent Bowen Report, while mentioning 'irregularities', was essentially, as Fred Halliday has aptly written, 'an exemplary White-

hall cover-up operation'. George Brown, the then Labour Foreign Secretary, in his introduction to the Bowen report, justified the torture at Fort Morbut, writing that it:

'had operated with considerable success, having provided information leading to the discovery of numerous arms caches and to the arrest of a large number of terrorists.'

In February 1966 the government announced that they would be abandoning the Aden base, while hoping that a neo-colonial Federal Government would continue to look after imperialist interests. Yet the Labour government maintained the presence of 17,000 British soldiers in Aden for a further 21 months. Under Labour military expenditure in Aden had increased from £3.6 million in 1963/4 to almost £14 million in 1967/68. Life for most Arabs in Aden became one of constant street searches and house raids, frequently accompanied by cowardly acts of bullying or vicious beatings from the British soldiers. One British Battalion alone, in a period of six months, searched 35,000 Arabs and 8,000 vehicles in the course of which they captured only 12 grenades and 6 pistols. In the eleven months of 1967, when the British were still in Aden, British Forces killed 119 Arabs and wounded 123.

In June 1967 Labour Foreign Secretary George Brown announced that Britain would not now withdraw until January 1968, and that Britain would supply arms to the hoped for pro-imperialist Federal Government. Labour planned to station a military mission in Aden and provide air and naval support for a period after 'independence'. This move was applauded by the Tories. The Conservative ex-colonial Minister Duncan Sandys even said that while listening to George Brown he could have been listening to himself.

Soon, however, this plan by the Labour imperialists was in tatters. The Crater district of Aden was occupied by the NLF for thirteen days in an historic uprising on 20 June 1967. The NLF released hundreds of prisoners, gutted the Legislative Assembly building and handed villas belonging to British officers over to the people.

The armed struggle was successfully brought to a conclusion on 30 November 1967 when the British forces were driven out of Aden and South Yemen was declared independent.

The People's Republic of South Yemen, born out of such determined struggle against imperialism, immediately declared its support for the revolutionary movements of the Palestinian people and continues to this day to provide consistent material support for the Palestinian guerrilla organisations.

On winning independence, the NLF leadership immediately tackled the problems left by colonial rule. In the early years of independence foreign banks and capital were nationalised, the landlords were expropriated and the land distributed to the toilers. State and co-operative farms were established that today account for over half of Yemen's agricultural production. A new public health service was introduced and the provision of education at all levels was vastly expanded. The number of students has grown from 65,000 in 1967 to 400,000 today. The social and

economic position of Yemeni women has also been radically improved since the revolution.

Even after being thrown out of Aden, the British Labour government continued its counter-revolutionary activity. Only £3m of a £60m aid package promised by the Labour government ever materialised while this same government sponsored armed attacks against the newly named Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen. Over the next 10 years British imperialism was to use and refine the lessons of repression and torture it learnt in South Yemen, and apply them against the nationalist minority in the Six Counties of Ireland. The Labour Party in government was to be the driving force in this process.

Bill Hughes

Changing of the guard in Oman

The recent appointment of ex-SAS commander Major-General John Watts as defence chief in Oman marks the end of General Timothy Creasey's three year stint at the post. Creasey has had a long history of defending British imperialism against liberation struggles, commanding troops in Kenya, Aden and most recently Ireland, where he was army chief from 1977-79. He was in charge of the brutal suppression of the liberation movement in Oman between 1972 and 1975, a campaign in which British soldiers burned down villages, shot animals and propped up corpses of rebels in market places. It was probably this that endeared Sir Timothy to the heart of Sultan Qaboos, who asked for his reappointment.

Oman is a British colony in all but name, with the Chief of Defence Staff and all three service commanders being serving British officers on loan to the Sultan. The country is of considerable strategic importance to British imperialism, being situated at the entrance to the oil rich Persian Gulf. There is also, of course, lots of profit to be made off the back of the Omani people by British money-grabbers. Not least by Mark Thatcher who caused quite a scandal by taking a lucrative 'consultancy fee' to get a £300m contract for Cementation International Ltd to build a university in Oman when his mum was in Oman on a state visit. General Creasey himself has done quite well out of Oman, installing himself in a £2m beach villa, refurbishing it at a cost of £170,000, then putting in a tennis court for £40,000 which soon, according to the General's exacting standards, needed a new surface at £18,000.

This sea of corruption has now brought a new scandal to the surface. This time it is to do with overpriced British military goods being bought by Sultan Qaboos, who spends 40% of his budget defending himself from his people, and whose chief adviser on military spending is none other than General Creasey. Already a senior British official in the Oman Ministry of Defence has fled the country fearing for his safety after bringing to the attention of General Creasey 'financial negligence', such as the purchase of Chieftain tanks for £1½m that Jordan gets for £1m.

Another British man, Robin Walsh, died two days after being taken to prison on the orders of General Creasey, reportedly from being forced to stand in the sun without water in a temperature of 120 degrees. Walsh was secretary of the Tenders Board in the Oman Defence Ministry, the body responsible for buying military equipment before Creasey took over the job. Despite the mysterious circumstances surrounding his death, Home Secretary Leon Brittan invoked a rarely used power to personally sign a certificate exempting the body from an inquest when it returned to Britain. It was cremated two days later. Creasey's successor, with his background in the SAS, will no doubt know a few dirty tricks of his own to continue the cover-ups of British corruption and profiteering in Oman. Colin Thorn



Reviews

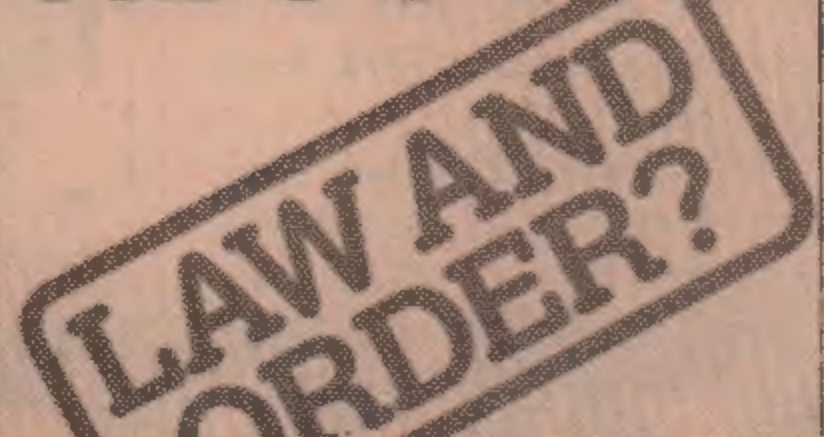
POLICE IN PINK UNIFORM

What is to be done about Law and Order?, John Lea and Jock Young, Penguin, 1984, pp284, £2.95

John Lea and Jock Young describe themselves as oriented 'towards the left of the Labour Party' (p122). In fact, their racist and reactionary views would win a warm welcome in the Tory Party and make the left of the Labour Party look positively red-blooded. For our authors call for a tout's charter as part of a 'socialist' policy on law and order; they welcome ex-torturer and RUC chief Kenneth Newman (who they call 'Sir Kenneth' with breathless intimacy); they attack Labour councils that have refused to co-operate with police liaison committees; and they talk of an "ethnic factor" intrinsic to the ethnic minorities' in discussing the alleged involvement of black people in certain types of 'crime'. All this is done in the name of 'socialism'.

Our authors begin by making certain 'discoveries'. Having deliberately confined themselves to what are 'conventionally thought of and defined as crimes' (p11) — ie what the ruling class defines as 'crime' — they 'discover' that most of these 'crimes' are committed by the poor

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against the poor. They then 'discover' that these 'crimes' are an individualist reaction to intolerable conditions and not a political solution to the problems confronting the working class and oppressed. Finally they 'discover' that black people, because of racist oppression, are disproportionately represented among the poor and therefore disproportionately represented in official figures for such 'crimes'. These 'discoveries' are common know-

ledge among Marxists and have been so for more than 100 years. Engels made precisely these points in 1844 — though the position of black people was then largely occupied by Irish people. No doubt our authors will next 'discover' that the world is round. However, they give these 'discoveries' a decidedly reactionary twist.

Marxists are well aware that the brutal and corrupted and racist character of imperialist society constantly produces and reproduces brutality, corruption and racism. The solution for Marxists is clear: remove the source of this brutality, corruption and racism by overthrowing imperialism and establishing socialism. True, this is easier said than done. Our authors, however have a different solution: bring 'crime' under control. Not the crime of the British imperialist ruling class imposing unemployment, racism, national oppression, poverty and war on the working class and oppressed. No. They mean the 'crimes' of the poor: controlling 'crime' is a cover for controlling the working class and oppressed.

Whilst pompously promoting themselves as pioneers of a 'new' 'left realism' Lea and Young are, in fact, carriers of a very old and very British disease: Fabian evolutionary socialism. They propose to create a 'socialist' system of justice — accompanied no doubt by 'socialist' courts, prisons, police etc — without any socialism! For them, the state is not the instrument of the bourgeoisie against the working class and oppressed. They tell us that:

'At the present moment the British state represents very largely ruling-class interests, but gains can be wrung out of it; reforms... are possible and, in fact, relate to the state as in essence a site of *contradicting interests*.' (p103, emphasis added)

This hogwash leads to the supplementary conclusion that the law:

'not only involves ruling-class domination: it has a *legitimate component* to it,

in terms of the *protection of working class interests*... It is in the interests of working-class people that crime is controlled, and it is in their interest that the agencies of the state deal with crime in a just and effective fashion.' (p104, emphasis added)

Having discovered that the world is round, our authors promptly declare it to be flat.



Police in Toxteth, July 1981

The state is, as all Marxists know, the 'executive committee' of the ruling class: its laws, police, army, courts, prisons etc are all fashioned to ensure the continued rule of the imperialist bourgeoisie. When the ruling class and its police attack 'crime' they are, in fact, attacking the working class and oppressed. When the racist police invade a black community it is not in order to protect the community against 'crime' but to repress the community on behalf of a racist state. Lea and Young's old old Fabianism leads them to direct support for the imperialist state and its racist police.

They describe the appointment of torturer Newman as progressive (p102). They call for police-community 'co-operation' against 'crime' and argue the need for 'more information' to flow to the police (p170 and throughout). They call for 'socialist' justice including 'victim restitution schemes' (p268 — this is a proposition

OBITUARY FRANK ROWE

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! is sorry to hear of the death of Frank Rowe the playwright. He died on 5 September 1984 in Australia. A lifelong communist, he campaigned for the rights of the Aborigine people for 50 years and helped run the Pension Scheme for New South Wales. Ainnie

much promoted in the Tory Party). They regret that some people will have to go to prison (p267). They call for 'Citizen groups' to patrol estates with the police (p267). All this reaction is called a 'left realism crime control programme' (p266). Lea and Young are police in pink uniform.

This book is not about 'law and order'. It is about the deluded efforts of two middle class socialist professors to control the poor on behalf of the rich. One quote says it all:

'Alarming also was the MORI poll of August 1979 which showed an increasing propensity on the part of young people to sanction violence as an acceptable means of political change.' (p215)

Our authors will do their best to put a stop to this.

Terry O'Halloran



Black Dog

Black Dog — Inj'emnyama was performed before multi-racial audiences at the Market Theatre, Johannesburg and the Baxter Theatre, Cape Town. Created by Barney Simon and the company. Performed in London at the Tricycle Theatre Company, Kilburn.

This play focuses on the lives and experiences of six South Africans, four black and two white, living through the Soweto Uprisings of 16 June 1976. The opening scene describes the boycott of classes by black students in opposition to being forced to speak and learn in Afrikaans. A leader emerges, who everyone calls Black Dog, who encourages the students and school children to march in peaceful protest against the education system. 'Don't throw stones...' he says, '...just sing', which they do and are immediately attacked by police with tear gas and bullets. The tone of protest changes, as Black Dog says, 'we forget about peace... we were not afraid...' and they organise to fight back. The opening ends with one black student staggering home through the smoke and wreckage of the township. He hears a report on the radio of the uprising which is a pack of lies. 'I wanted to kick the radio dead...' he says, 'but it cost us three years to pay for it.'

The scene switches to focus on the white male character, whose opening line is, 'sport was my big thing at school...' I was victor ludo of the school twice....'

Typically he goes into the army, describing the tough course that trains you to 'obey a command without thinking... if you start thinking you're stuffed.' He later goes on to describe the day he got his wings and went back to his old school to give out prizes at sports day. For him this was 'the symbol for the traditions we were defending on our borders... kill the terrorists... that was the job!'

In sharp contrast, the other black characters in the play emerge — an old man from the bantustans who manages to get a job in Johannesburg as a night watchman and lives like thousands of black men in South Africa, separated from his family in a hostel. There is a character who bitterly describes himself as Cape Coloured, and a young black woman Mandisa who plays a revolutionary role throughout. The other white character is a young woman, Rita, who throughout the play outlines her upbringing. Her first memories are being told by her governess, 'if you don't work hard the blacks will take your jobs', and praying nightly, 'let Russia please disappear'.

There are many climaxes in the play which is interspersed with militant singing of freedom songs. One powerful moment is the explanation of the title, Black Dog. During part of the uprisings, when the youth were organising to attack the police, the leader says, for years they had been treated like black dogs by the whites, so, 'we became black dogs... and now the black dogs are hungry... angry... have broken their chains. The whites will see what the black dogs can do'. Another scene shows the emergence of young black women in the fighting, 'watch out boers' the woman sings, 'the young girls are coming', and the power and freedom felt by the youth when they take over the schools — they found new heroes, Nelson Mandela and other black African leaders, they read black poets, 'everyone just felt brilliant'. Another scene change to the hostels and to the police inciting the hostel workers to go and attack the youth, threatening that unless they do they will lose their jobs. And meanwhile the white woman is describing the first time she fell in love, watching the helicopters flying over the garden and on to Soweto.

Gradually the play reaches a final climax in the macabre setting, once again, of the white man's school, another sports day where everyone is congratulating him for his part in attacking SWAPO bases. He is rapidly cracking up because of the war and his fear and inability to understand why black men and women are prepared to fight back and die. Of one of the black men he shot dead he asks, 'was he forced to come or what?' The penultimate scene

shows him grovelling on the grass with his white friends crowding round him unable to comprehend what was happening to him.

The final scene lasts a few seconds only and leaves no doubt as to where the forces will come from to destroy apartheid. A single light shines on the black woman, dancing and singing 'watch out boers' the young girls are coming.

It is an extremely powerful play which in the light of recent events in South Africa where black youth have risen up again in Soweto and the huge success of the UDF organised election boycott is of critical significance. As the director says, 'apartheid remains a wasteful and murderous lie... it kills bodies and souls... and it will not prevail.'

Alexa Byrne

Annual cover-up

Report on the work of the Prison Department 1983, HMSO £7.60

'1983 was a year rich in incident for the Prison Service', says CJ Train, Director General of Prisons in the opening line of this report presented to Parliament in July 1984. Pages are devoted to the 'education', 'recreational pursuits' and 'training' of prisoners, with glossy photos of prison officers using new computers and Leon Brittan commending Principal Officer, Ronald Dixon, for his 'courage and decisive leadership...' brutalising prisoners at Wormwood Scrubs, etc.

More prisoners

Disregarding the 'abouts', 'nearlys' and 'fluctuations' of the report's account of population, there was in 1983, as in 1982, an increase in the number of adult male prisoners in closed prisons — up 200 to 26,800 with a peak in February of over 30,300, and an increase to 3,100 in open prisons — up 100. Likewise, more women were locked up in 1983, 1,390 — an average daily population of 5% higher than 1982 and a peak of 1,470. Consequently, overcrowding was critical with the number of male prisoners sharing 3 to a cell, up by 594 to 4,971 and women had to be locked up in police cells, especially from Holloway, as a result of increased numbers.

More druggings

The Prison Department has done well this year in its attempts to confuse and mislead the public as to the amounts of drugs

given to prisoners. Previously, drug tables related to doses *dispensed*, this year they relate to doses *administered*. This makes it virtually impossible to compare 1983 figures with 1982. However it is important to note that figures have not dropped dramatically as might have been expected and have in fact risen by 3,145 doses. In the case of Wormwood Scrubs the number of drugs administered that act on the central nervous system, rose by a devastating 15,272. This means that the average dose per prisoner rose from 109 to 130.

Drugs league: top twelve

Prison	Total drugs administered	Average per head
Cookham Wood/Styal (Women's prisons)	105,032	295
Holloway (Women's prison)	82,140	247
Wakefield	129,665	183
Bullwood Hall/East Sutton Park (Women's prisons)	24,843	183
Parkhurst	46,021	172
Brixton	125,151	163
Askham Grange/Drake Hall (women's prisons)	51,236	154
Wormwood Scrubs	133,385	130
Wandsworth	164,086	120

The total amount of drugs dealt out in 1983 was 2,298,806 an overall average of 53 doses per prisoner.

More deaths

64 people died in custody in 1983, up by 3 on 1981 and 21 people committed suicide, up by 4. The report, as an aside brackets the case of one death, 'aggravated by lack of care'. Verdicts of 'misadventure' were recorded on six prisoners — one had covered himself with a mattress and set it on fire, one was found hanging, one strangled, one died of drug and alcohol withdrawal, one from thrombosis in the leg and one of a heart attack. 'Open' verdicts were recorded on 4 prisoners, 2 found hanging, one who died from peritonitis and one who jumped from an NHS hospital window. Typically, no details are given in the report of the above deaths.

More resistance

'Rich in incident' 1983 certainly was in terms of the organised and determined fight back by prisoners against the ever-increasing brutality they are subjected to. It is highly significant that as early as paragraph 2 of the report the 'serious incidents' at Albany and Wormwood Scrubs are described as 'matters of great concern'. As usual, the report attempts to de-politicise the protests calling them 'acts of concerted indiscipline' and tries to depict them

in terms of mindless violence. There is no doubt, however, that the publicity attracted by these justified protests exposing the brutality and repression in the prisons undermined the humane and progressive image that the Home Office likes to project and caused severe damage to the system both operationally and economically.

During 1983 there were more hostage-taking incidents than ever before, 12 in all, which the report describes as 'a most un-



Prisoners protest at Albany, May 1983

welcome new trend' and 'very serious'. Not surprisingly in acknowledging that none of the staff taken hostage suffered physical injury, the report gives all praise to the 'professional skill of staff in resolving them' and none where credit is actually due, to the prisoners who were justifiably trying to draw public attention to the realities existing behind prison walls.

Finally, 1983 saw historic and major victories for prisoners' rights being won by prisoners themselves. Most notable are the victories of James Tarrant and Jimmy Anderson in securing the right of prisoners to legal representation in Boards of Visitors hearings and the 'simultaneous ventilation' rule which enables prisoners to make complaints about prison treatment direct to a lawyer without first having to complain internally. Both these cases were fought and won in the Divisional court and Lord Justice Goff declared that the Home Office's standing order controlling access to lawyers was not authorised by English law. The report has no choice but to include these two cases but no significant comment is made on the rulings.

In keeping with Home Office style, the report obscures and covers over the reality of repression in British prisons and the growing organised resistance by prisoners to that repression.

Alexa Byrne



The bombed out US embassy in Beirut

LEBANON Imperialist plan destined for the dustbin

On 17 September, 10,000 Palestinians marched through Sabra-Chatilla refugee camp to commemorate the second anniversary of the Phalangist massacre of 900 of its unarmed inhabitants. The demonstration, the first by Palestinians in Beirut since the June 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon marked another stage in the revival of the popular movement. As if in reply, the new Israeli Labour-Likud government invited General Ariel Sharon, the architect of the invasion and guardian of the Sabra-Chatilla assassins, to join its inner cabinet. A cabinet post for butcher Sharon reveals Zionism's inability to function without mass murderers and criminals at its helm. But it cannot resolve the serious crisis of the Zionist state.

Ravaged by 400% inflation and \$23bn foreign debt, the Israeli economy is collapsing. The new government has been forced to introduce austerity measures raising purchase tax by 10%, postal rates by 60%, water and electricity by 30% and a wage and prices freeze. These steps, undermining the social cohesion of the Zionist state, cast even darker shadows on Zionism's biggest nightmare in South Lebanon. There the occupying forces have totally failed to stabilise their rule and face an uncon-

trollable resurgence of the anti-Zionist revolutionary movement. On average Israeli forces are subjected to 2-3 attacks a day by units of the Lebanese National Resistance Front (LNRF), an Israeli soldier is wounded every two days and one killed every ten days.

The spectre of economic collapse and revolutionary insurrection in South Lebanon drove the new Foreign Minister Yitzak Shamir to the USA to plead for more money and arms. US imperialism, affirming Israel's vital counter-

revolutionary role in the Middle East immediately guaranteed, and without any strings, \$1.3bn in economic and military aid for 1985, in addition to the \$2.6bn granted this year. Matters were not left to rest there. US imperialism has recognised that Israeli military might alone is incapable of holding back the movement of the oppressed masses in South Lebanon. Al Ansar concentration camp has been filled with Lebanese militants and thousands have been processed through 4 interrogation and torture centres. Israeli Shin Bet death squads have murdered, kidnapped and terrorised. The South Lebanese Army, lackeys of the Israelis, who cold-bloodedly shot dead 13 villagers in Sohomon on 20 September, have been given free rein. Quislings, spies, racketeers and gangsters go about their business while the authorities attempt to starve the people into submission by closing off Beirut, the market for their agricultural produce, and destroying their orchards. Rather than extinguish the flames of

resistance, these measures are turning them into a blaze.

The Reagan administration and the Israeli government have, therefore, launched a diplomatic initiative to involve the Syrian regime in the task of restraining the growing revolutionary movement. In September Richard Murphy, US Assistant Secretary of State, met Syrian President Assad and the Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres. Whatever eventual arrangement they may work out — any variation on partial Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon in exchange for a Syrian guarantee to prevent the PLO re-establishing itself there — imperialism's confidence in the Syrian regime is not misplaced. It was the Assad regime which halted the insurrectionary movement of the oppressed masses in West Beirut and the Shouf in February 1983 which nearly toppled the sectarian Lebanese state. It established the Karami government — a coalition of Phalangists and the bourgeois leaders of Amal and the Progressive Socialist Party — which has tried to disarm the revolutionary militias and restore power to the Phalange dominated army. The Syrian regime also continues to sabotage attempts by the revolutionary forces of the PLO to reunify the movement and reestablish bases in Lebanon.

The Syrian regime is eager to make a deal with imperialism. Israeli brutality and repression in the south has not only led to the consolidation of the LNRF, it has given the impetus to the formation in Beirut of the Lebanese National Democratic Front (LNDP). Composed of the Lebanese Communist Party, the PSP and other democratic forces, the LNDP's main aim is to provide help for the LNRF and fight to dismantle the sectarian Lebanese state. The Lebanese Communist Party has also publicly come out in favour of Palestinians re-arming in Lebanon and fighting alongside the other resistance forces.

Imperialist manoeuvres and Zionist terror will not halt the revival of anti-imperialist forces in Lebanon which are fed by growing poverty and suffering among Lebanon's masses, the continued Zionist occupation of South Lebanon, the irrepressible combativity of the youth and opposition to the sectarian Lebanese state. The suicide bomb attack on the US embassy on 20 September in the heart of Phalangist East Beirut was a demonstration that the Lebanese people are prepared to die rather than accept deals and compromises which leave Zionism and imperialism dominant in their land.

Eddie Abrahams

FRANCE

From austerity to rigour

If the British Labour left can raise their heads from the mounds of resolutions from this month's conference, they could do well to reflect on the French experience. Three years ago, when Mitterrand was elected President, we were informed that France would be a showcase for 'reformism in action'. And so it has proved to be, but not in terms of the easy socialist utopia generated through 'structural reforms'. Far from being a model to be followed, it has become a warning to British workers. Despite more radical economic policies than the Labour Party, the French Socialists have ended up producing a budget that Thatcher could have been proud of.

'Austerity' is out and 'rigour' is in, according to French Socialist Finance Minister, Pierre Berégovoy. In announcing his first budget he called for 'rigour, social justice and hope'. Behind these words were budget policies well known to workers in Britain and the USA. Taxes are to be cut for the better off and for business, while public spending on social services, housing and health are to be slashed. Defence spending on both conventional and nuclear arms is to rise steeply. New taxes on petrol and electricity will raise prices and wage controls are in the pipe-line. Yvon Gattaz, president of the Patronat, the employers' organisations, welcomed the 'realism' of the budget. From this we can take it Berégovoy's 'justice and hope' is for the

bosses and 'rigour' is for the workers.

Despite electoral promises of a 'break with capitalism' three years ago, the majority of French people have experienced the brunt of the economic crisis under the Socialist government in much the same way they did when the right was in power. Mass sackings are under way in most sectors of industry — 70,000 jobs have already been lost in the car industry, and thousands more are to go in coal and steel. The new budget will be another turning of the screw and there are plans for more redundancies, including in the civil service.

Since July the French Communist party has been out of the government. However it has been more concerned to discuss its own delicate position of

declining electoral strength than deal with the task of mounting a fightback against the government. At the September Central Committee meeting Georges Marchais, the party secretary, presented a report which laments the departure from the viciously anti-working class government in terms normally reserved for the divorce courts. "We did everything we could right up to the end to make the association of communists and socialists succeed". Indeed Marchais is open for a reconciliation, as he says the split 'was in no way an abandonment'. The report is in fact stamped with the opportunism of a party which has become thoroughly entangled with the French imperialist state for four decades.

The French Socialists like the British Labour Party accept and constantly nourish the foundations of the capitalist state. In a startling moment of honesty Berégovoy explained this when he said 'It is a left-wing budget, because the Left is not disbarred from managing the State well'. After three years of the Socialist and Communist parties managing the state, it's time the French workers took matters into their own hands.

John Strawson

Hong Kong reunited with China

In the negotiations about the future of Hong Kong, Thatcher soon came to realise that her gunboat diplomacy Falklands-style was not an option since Britain's military threat to China is little more than a fly on an elephant's tail.

During the two year long negotiations Thatcher had to climb down from her high horse more than once. First in September 1982 when she had insisted that the 19th century 'treaties' imposed on the Chinese people under duress were valid in international law, for which read 'imperialism's law'. So China replied the treaties were 'ironclad proof of British imperialism's plunder of Chinese territory' and subsequently set the tone for the negotiations: Chinese sovereignty over Hong Kong was not negotiable and unless agreement about how and when it was to be exercised was reached by September 1984 the People's Republic would announce its plans for Hong Kong unilaterally. And China stood by this. The Joint Declaration issued by the governments of the PRC and Britain on 26 September states that from 1997 Hong Kong will be directly under the authority of the Central People's Government of the PRC. No form of British administration after 1997.

However, China's current economic needs for foreign technical expertise and equipment have forced the PRC government to make concessions to capitalism for 50 years after 1997 in order not to drive away capital investment and technical know-how. Hong Kong is estimated to supply one third of China's foreign exchange earnings. The weakness of the socialist and anti-imperialist movement in the capitalist heartlands has allowed imperialism to starve China of the means to fully build up its economy. To gain those means the Chinese government has been made to retreat on the economic and social character of Hong Kong's future. The PRC thus declared its intent 'to resume the nation's sovereignty over Hong Kong while maintaining its prosperity and stability'.

With Hong Kong's reunification with China, the imperialists will lose a key outpost which in the past has been used for military aggression against the people of South East Asia.

Ulla May

THREE BASQUES EXTRADITED

On Friday 21 September the French Supreme Court of Appeal ordered the extradition of 3 Basque political exiles to Spain. All three have been on hunger strike for over forty days with two of them being force-fed. 4 other exiles were expelled to Togo. This increasing collaboration between the French and Spanish Socialist governments ends the use of French territory as political sanctuary for those fighting for self-determination for the Basques.

The extradition of the 3 brought an upsurge of popular resistance. On Wednesday 26 September a successful general strike took place in the Basque region. Herri Batasuna (the political party fighting for self-determination) estimated a 55% success across the region, with San Sebastian at a complete standstill. Youth fought battles with the police for several nights. A direct hit with a petrol bomb on a police jeep injured several policemen. At Saint Jean de Luz in France people fought the police after a demonstration against the extradition was attacked by the police using tear gas.

ETA has stated that it will intensify the armed struggle. On 28 September 3 Civil Guards were killed by a booby-trap bomb on a railway line. They were the first of the hated Civil Guard to be killed since June.

Nigel Doyle

LAOS

US imperialism has vowed to turn back the victories of the Indo-Chinese revolutions. Last year an expeditionary force of US Vietnam veterans and mercenaries penetrated deep into Laos, claiming to be in search of US citizens held captive there. On 6 June this year the Thai Army invaded Laos and occupied three Laotian villages, producing a US Army map to justify their actions. The Lao villagers were subjected to heavy shelling, abduction to the Thai border, curfew, rape and the destruction of their homes. Fortifications have been built around the villages turning them into strongholds for sabotage attacks on the revolutionary Laotian people.

To the south the Thai Army has massed itself along the border of Sayaboury Province close to the Laotian-Kampuchean border. This region is riddled with CIA-run bases on Thai territory, used to attack the Kampuchean and Vietnamese peoples. The Lao People's Democratic Republic has responded to the imperialist provocation and warned that 'nothing will be able to quench the hatred and the determination of the army and Lao people' should the Thai invaders not withdraw.

Trevor Rayne

Prisoners Fightback

Controlling resistance

Most of the report is written in the bogusly 'liberal' language such reports always use but every so often the truth breaks through. The report argues that:

'Long-term prisons will, by their nature, always contain many men who are aggressive, manipulative and hostile to authority. Moreover, establishments operating a regime which allows inmates to move and associate relatively freely, as long-term prisons do, will always be more vulnerable to disruption than ones operating a tighter regime...' (paragraph 41)

The report then uses various labels to describe the prisoners it wants to control: 'prisoners who deliberately foment riots' (paragraph 42); 'disruptive population' (paragraph 45); 'calculatedly subversive' (paragraph 55) and so on. These are the prisoners who must be removed from the main prison system.

The report proposes the establishment of separate units within dispersal prisons to house these prisoners; that is to say, prisons within prisons. These new units will isolate 'subversive' prisoners from the rest of the prison population. 'No prizes for guessing where Irish POWs would be located! The purpose of this is to prevent politicised prisoners from organising resistance inside the prisons. These units will be punitive, super-secure control units. The report calls for 'five or six' (paragraph 54) to be established modelled on F wing Wakefield. F wing is the former control unit. There will be no appeal procedure, no adjudication process, no legal representation for prisoners shanghaied into these units.

Alongside the new units goes an increase in repression throughout the prison system. The report proposes that the infamous 10/74 rule be extended to

In July the Home Office Control Review Committee published its report entitled *Managing the Long-Term Prison System*. The report describes itself as:

'... a balanced set of proposals which would bring many parts of the prison system into play in a positive, developmental manner.' (paragraph 2)

The report is, in fact, a recipe for systematic repression aimed at isolating and breaking prisoners who resist the inhuman British prison system. The basic argument of this document is that there is a hard core of 'disruptive' prisoners who must be separated from the 'mainstream' of the prison system in order to prevent their 'disrupting' 'open regimes'.

cover all category B closed prisons. At present this arbitrary power is confined to dispersal prisons. It is the power that allows governors to have 'subversive' prisoners transferred into unlimited sol-



itary confinement in local prisons solely on the governor's own authority. Conditions for 10/74 prisoners normally mean 24 hour lock-up denied all the 'privileges' they normally have. In a classic piece of hypocrisy the report declares:

'... we do not believe that it would be defensible deliberately... to hold men in these conditions for very long periods.' (paragraph 50)

Ex-Albany prisoners spent up to ten months in 'these conditions' following the Albany protest of May 1983. The extension of 10/74 to all category B closed prisons represents a major increase in repression.

But this is not the end of the story. The report also proposes that 'privileges' be linked to 'behaviour' (paragraph 28). In other words prisoners' rights - which are called 'privileges' - are to be made directly dependent on 'behaviour' - that is conforming to the regime. This too represents a major increase in repression. Prisoners' rights are already systematically denied but this report proposes to make the granting of 'privileges' dependent on 'good behaviour'. It cites, as an example, locating prisoners near their families:

'Nearness to home is certainly an important factor in any prisoner's allocation, but it is never absolutely

over-riding... a deliberate transfer to a prison in a part of the country that is a long way from a prisoner's choice is itself a sanction which we should not lose sight of...' (paragraph 38)

The deliberate attempt to break family links by making it next to impossible for families to visit is already used against Irish POWs as a whole and against other prisoners who resist. The report proposes to make this vicious assault on prisoners' rights systematic. Prisoners will have to 'earn' the right to be near their families. How Irish POWs, who are denied repatriation, will achieve this is not explained in the report.

Managing the Long-Term Prison System is therefore simply a report aimed at 'managing' those who resist the prison system. It proposes to create a systematic combination of segregation, 10/74, Rule 43, withdrawal of 'privileges'. This deadly combination will be aimed first and foremost against Irish POWs and other politicised prisoners. These are the 'calculatedly subversive' prisoners that the Control Review Committee hopes to control. All those who support the rights of prisoners should condemn this report and resist its implementation. There is no doubt that prisoners will resist it.

Terry O'Halloran



PRISON NEWS

● News reaching FRFI indicates that tension is rising fast once again in Albany caused by the regime there. The rooftop protest there in May 1983 had important consequences and two of these were discussed at the annual conference of prison Boards of Visitors on 1 October, reported in the *Guardian*. The first concerned the right of legal representation for prisoners at disciplinary hearings before Boards of Visitors, won in Divisional Court last October. Since then 95 prisoners have been granted legal representation. 45 of these cases have been heard. What we are not told is how many applications were rejected. At the same conference, Home Office Prison Department minister Lord Elton welcomed Brittan's new plans for the prison system which followed Albany. Using the usual distorted language of the Home Office, he criticised the old: 'The system punishes those who behave well and rewards offenders', and welcomed the new: a clearer connection between 'behaviour' and 'privileges'. In particular the new special units (for 'subversives'), which he of course denied were the same as the old control units (for 'disruptives') will play a central role. They must be sold to the public carefully by convincing them that the prison system operates in a 'completely open manner'.

● The dire regime in the psychiatric wing of C Block in Holloway women's prison has already led to two deaths and a recent spate of dreadful injuries. The wing holds 40 women. One woman, left on her own for two days in a cell was found with an eye gouged out. Another attempted the same and there have been other serious injuries. The women say the regime means that 'for medical reasons' they are not allowed out of their cells; they have only a mattress on the floor and a polty; work and education has been stopped because of 'staff shortages'; and the routine is broken only by the food and drugs trolley coming round. 14 women protested at the regime in the exercise yard on 10 September. We do not know the result of this protest.

● As an important new weapon in Brittan's armoury, Park Lane special hospital has been opened on Merseyside by Norman Fowler, who spends the rest of his time closing down NHS hospitals. The 400-cell prison (to date holding 260) will stand alongside Broadmoor and Rampton as a major prison hospital for 'nutting off' prisoners under section - the ultimate threat (bar death) hanging over those who oppose the prison system.

● Irish POW Eddie O'Neill, well known to FRFI readers for his role in the fight for prisoners' rights in the Albany '83 protest and since, has been on 'lie-down' in Durham under Home Office instruction 10/74 since 25 July. He has been told that the Home Office intend to keep him on 10/74 indefinitely, meaning indefinite solitary. Eddie witnessed the refurbishing of the Wakefield Control Unit recently, confirming the Home Office plans to reopen several control units under a different name.

● Following the Parkhurst siege trial in May (FRFI 40), John Bowden was only three weeks back on normal location before the harassment began all over again. He was moved from Gartree to Winson Green in the week he was due to see his elderly parents for the first time for two long years. Unspecified 'information received' is the excuse the screws are giving for suddenly treating him as a security risk. And the web of lies has also involved Ronnie Menzies. As a result Ronnie is down the block in Gartree under Rule 43 (GOD). The convenient rumour, a total fabrication that John and Ronnie were plotting to take hostages, has originated from a source other than amongst the prisoners in Ronnie's view! FRFI sends it's greetings to Eddie, John and Ronnie.

Tony Sheridan

Prisoners support miners

A recent letter to FRFI from black revolutionary prisoner Shujaa Moshesh reveals the support being given to striking miners by prisoners. Shujaa writes:

'Just heard on the news that a writ has been served against Arthur Scargill which could lead to him being sent to prison this coming Thursday for contempt of court. Last week a judge ruled in favour of two working miners to have the strike declared unlawful because there was no national ballot. It is under this ruling King Arthur can be committed to prison. If he is locked up he won't find any lack of support in these places, the guys here have a lot of respect for him; so much so that we had a collection for the miners and raised £102. That is a good result when you consider most guys are in prison because they suffered from a severe shortage of money on the other side of the wall.' Shujaa Moshesh, HMP Hull

Jimmy Anderson, who helped to win important legal victories on behalf of all prisoners following the Albany and Wormwood Scrubs protests last year, has sent £3 to FRFI to be forwarded to the miners' strike fund. This solidarity from prisoners is yet further evidence of the political stance taken by many prisoners today.

Victory to the miners!
Victory to the prisoners!

Board stung by truth

The revelations about brutality in Wandsworth (see FRFI 42) were also published in the *New Statesman* (14 September). This has stung a Mr David Walburn, Chairman of Wandsworth Board of Visitors, to come to the defence of this hell-hole prison. In a letter printed in the *New Statesman* (21 September) Walburn attacks the exposure of conditions in Wandsworth as 'sensationalist' and claims that the evidence of systematic brutality by prison officers is 'fantastic'. At the same time he says he will order an investigation. Some investigation this will be when he has already publicly denounced the evidence as 'fantastic'! He also claims that I refused an offer to visit Wandsworth segregation unit with him. This is a lie. I informed him that I would take up the offer when the Home Office supplied information that I had been seeking for several weeks. This they finally did on 25 September when they revealed that prisoners were put under restraint 30 times between January and July, and placed in special cells 80 times between the same dates. I immediately passed on Walburn's invitation to the Home Office. I have heard nothing since. Walburn's letter is clear confirmation of the role of Boards of Visitors - they are lapdogs for the Home Office not watchdogs for the prisoners.

Terry O'Halloran

Peterhead

The prison authorities are still trying to break the resistance of prisoners at Peterhead by singling out 'subversives'. Justice is systematically denied by these upholders of law and order who have yet to allow any prisoner legal representation before Boards of Visitors as ruled last year by the European Court of Human Rights.

Brutality and injustice are censored. Prisoners, who have fought for and won the right to have FRFI and other progressive literature, receive them with everything about prisons cut out. Letters are frequently suppressed. On 7 September a prisoner was held down by five screws in front of an Assistant Governor and two men in civilian clothing and batoned over the head by another screw. He had complained about the suppression of three letters written to the Scottish Council for Civil Liberties.

Prisoners who have come off the dirty protest are still being kept in indefinite solitary. Scottish prisons Minister Angram has said that the new units are for 'subversives' such as them. These will be control units. Now at the Scottish Prison Officers Conference a delegate who is also a screws' rep on the Standing Committee on Difficult Prisoners has proposed that the control regime include withdrawal of food from protesting prisoners.

Public protest in support of Peterhead prisoners continues. FRFI and relatives organised a second picket of the Scottish Office in Edinburgh on Friday 28 September calling for:

1 an independent inquiry into developments at Peterhead

- 2 abolition of control units
- 3 end to isolation on political grounds of 'subversives'
- 4 end to censorship of letters and literature
- 5 end to restrictions and harassment on visits
- 6 full rights of legal representation

The picket made its presence felt with militant chants between speeches by a prisoner's brother Alan Wardlaw, FRFI, Edinburgh Irish Solidarity Committee, Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee and Scottish Republican Socialist Party. Gateway Exchange withdrew support at the last minute. This second picket of the Scottish Office involved more prisoners' relatives and drew support from passers-by who readily signed the petition for the Abolition of Control Units and for an end to Isolation on Political Grounds and donated money to the campaign.

FRFI backs all initiatives for prisoners' rights and together with the SRSP is supporting a Glasgow Peterhead Prisoners' Support Committee set up by members of GIFAC, and a picket of the Scottish Office in Glasgow on Saturday 6 October.

Paul McKinlay

ISM NEWS

Throughout September Irish Solidarity Committees intensified their work to mobilise support for the Irish Solidarity Weekend on 13/14 October. September has heralded increased police harassment particularly in London. Police in Wood Green threatened NLISC supporters with arrest (in the free speech area won by NLISC two years ago) - NLISC stood its ground, and Jeremy Corbyn MP demanded that the police leave NLISC alone - they did and the right to free speech on Ireland was preserved! Two NLISC supporters were arrested for flyposting October posters - a minor charge with a £5 fine. Despite this the police proceeded to hold one of them Annie, overnight in a filthy police cell. She was denied a drink or privacy and subjected to threats of being held under the PTA. This blatant harassment is being fought by NLISC.

In Brixton, police have been harassing and arresting miners collections and other progressive groups. A SLISC street meeting was stopped under threat of arrest. SLISC went back on the 29 September with observers, journalists and the backing of Stuart Holland MP - the police backed down and SLISC defended the right to freedom of speech and free assembly. The fight is not yet won as an FRFI supporter, Ruby Noorani, leafletting for the ISM October events was arrested in Brixton three days before that street meeting and charged with 'wilful obstruction'. Her court case is on 25 October at Southwark Magistrates Court, Camberwell Green, SE5. We urge all ISM and FRFI supporters to protest to Commander Alex Mamoch, L Division, Cavendish Road Police Station about her arrest. ISCs will continue to fight for their right to free speech and assembly and no police harassment and censorship.

As well as street meetings and leaflettings, public meetings have taken place in Manchester, Edinburgh, South and North London - Welsh striking miners addressed the London meetings and were warmly welcomed. Edinburgh ISC and Manchester ISC marched on the 3,000 strong Britain Out of Ireland demonstration in Glasgow on 8 September. The march, despite Loyalist attacks, reached the City Centre for the first time since 1981. The Sinn Fein Sean O'Connell commemoration picket of Parkhurst prison on 30 September was held, unfortunately without the London coach (due to a break down) but Southampton ISC and Proletarian supporters mobilised a good contingent; Bristol TOM, and supporters from Portsmouth joined Sinn Fein on the picket calling for the five demands of the Irish Republican POW Campaign.

The Irish Solidarity Movement is supporting the annual Manchester Martyrs march called by Sinn Fein in support of Irish POWs and is attending mobilising committees in Manchester and London.

Finally, John McCluskey and other Irish prisoners in Parkhurst were allowed to receive the ISM letters previously stopped by the Governor. The ISM had asked several MPs to take this up and as a result this blatant censorship was defeated.

Pauline Sellers

REPLY TO SLANDERS

Ireland's War No 9, newspaper of the miniscule GIFAC, slanders the RCG and ISM. It claims:

1 That the RCG tried to prevent Sinn Fein from being invited to the South African Embassy Picket Campaign public meeting. This is a lie. RCG members in the SAEPIC supported Sinn Fein's participation in the campaign, and their right to have a banner on the pickets and to give solidarity messages at Campaign pickets and other events. David Reed in fact spoke in support of Sinn Fein giving a solidarity message at a major meeting of the SAEPIC. During these discussions the Ireland's War Supporters present remained silent. So much for their 'support' for Sinn Fein.

2 That RCG members tried to stop Ireland's War Supporters from chanting 'Victory to the IRA' on Sinn Fein's 5 August march. This is a lie.

3 That the RCG 'insulted' Sinn Fein by only carrying a short report of this march in FRFI. The 160 strong ISM contingent - including the RCG - on the Sinn Fein march was at least ten times larger than the Ireland's War contingent. Who is insulting whom?

FREE STATE IN CRISIS

In 'Ireland: the key to the British revolution', David Reed wrote:

'The Twenty Six Counties neo-colonial state is facing a political and economic crisis of unprecedented proportions. Having mortgaged itself to imperialism it can only pay back its debts by savagely attacking the Irish working class.'

Since that was written the crisis of the Free State economy has accelerated with disastrous consequences for the Irish working class.

Foreign borrowing today stands at nearly IR£7 billion - a 75% increase since 1982 (IR£4 billion). This debt continues to grow by about 10% per year. The rapid appreciation of the dollar and rising interest rates have massively added to the debt burden. Repayments this year will be over IR£600 million. Unless there is a substantial reduction in new borrowing this year, the Twenty Counties government will be forced to borrow more than it did last year simply in order to meet scheduled repayments. These repayments will exceed IR£650 million every year for the rest of the decade. This compares to annual repayments of IR£350 million over the last three years. The Irish ruling class is as bankrupt economically as it is politically. The policy of making Ireland a neo-colonial haven for imperialist investment and profiteering has had devastating results for the Irish economy and the Irish working class.

Alongside the enormous debt to imperialist banks goes imperialist control of the Free State economy. Foreign companies employ almost half of the Twenty Six Counties 200,000 manufacturing workers and account for 80% of exports. These companies, attracted by generous grants and tax concessions offered by a slavish Free State ruling class, made total profits of IR£1.2 billion in the last year. 60%, nearly IR£700 million, of this profit was 're-patriated' - stolen - rather than re-invested. The parasitic character of imperialist investment in the Twenty Six Counties is shown not only by this high level of repatriation of profits, but also by the fact that these foreign companies buy only 1/6 of their requirements - raw materials, components and so on - in Ireland. The result is that after two years decline, the Gross National Profit (GNP) is only likely to rise in real terms by 2.5% this year and by 1.5% next year. Imperialist investment, given its

parasitical character, cannot provide sustainable growth or value added to the Irish economy sufficient even to provide employment for the Twenty Six Counties' workforce which is growing by some 4% per year.

The Free State Industrial Development Agency estimates that only 10,000 extra jobs in manufacturing will be created by 1992 as a result of imperialist investment - even though output is expected to double. Not surprisingly the result of this imperialist domination is rapidly rising unemployment. In September it was reported that unemployment had reached 20%. It is estimated that it will reach 25% by February 1985. In August alone 2,000 more became unemployed bringing the total to 214,206 - more than the total number employed in manufacturing industry. A massive proportion - 68,281 - of the unemployed are under 25. These are the official figures which exclude thousands of youth in bogus Youth Employment Agency schemes and an even greater number induced to stay at school by an annual payment of £300 from the Department of Employment. The overall 20% unemployment rate also disguises areas of much higher unemployment. A recent survey revealed 54% unemployment in the Ballina-Swinford-Belmullet area of County Mayo.

Faced with the ever-increasing debt burden, Free State Prime Minister Garrett FitzGerald announced that there would be spending cuts on a scale not seen since the 1940s. On Tuesday 2 October the Fine Gael/Irish Labour Party Coalition government unveiled its three year plan *Building on Reality*. The plan will mean higher rents, higher school transport charges, higher third level education fees, higher health charges and higher food prices. The remaining food subsidies will be removed by 1986. This will mean at least 2p on the price of

a pint of milk, 8p on a pound of butter and 8p on a loaf of bread. Health spending will be cut by IR£30 million by 1987. Public sector employment is to be cut by a further 5,000 jobs - 3,000 have already been lost since 1982. Only 1 in every 3 vacancies in the public sector will be filled. All short-term welfare benefits, including the yet-to-be introduced child benefit of IR£30 per month, are to be taxed. A virtual pay freeze for three years will be imposed on the public sector. Rate support to local authorities is to be cut. Unemployment, even on the 'optimistic' assumptions of the government, will not fall. The plan provides for massive but unspecified cuts in public spending. The Public Sector Borrowing Requirement - which includes state-guaranteed borrowings as well as direct state borrowing - is to be cut from 17% of GNP to 11.25% of GNP by 1987. The Special Investigation Unit is to be strengthened to harass the poor on welfare benefits. The plan depends on a number of 'optimistic' assumptions: a stable punt; world trade growing by 4.5% per year; earnings in its main export markets growing by 7% per year; foreign and domestic interest rates falling; a public sector pay freeze and so on. If any one of these fails to materialise the plan will collapse. It constitutes a savage attack on the Irish working class who are expected to pay the price for imperialist profiteering.

As the Free State ruling class steps up its attack on the Irish working class it has no choice but also to step up repression. In particular it is forced to increase repression against those forces that have identified imperialist domination as the root cause of the problems facing the Irish working class: the Republican movement and its supporters. As poverty and misery grows in the Twenty Six Counties, particularly amongst the young unemployed, the possibility of social rebellion grows also. The fear that haunts the Irish ruling class is the potential for this social rebellion to

merge with the revolutionary national struggle against direct British rule in the Six Counties. Thus the increasing collaboration with British imperialism and increased repression against the Republican Movement.

The growing collaboration is seen in the recent extraditions of Dominic McGlinchey and Seamus Shannon. The non-jury Dublin Special Court has taken upon itself to define what constitutes 'political' action thus allowing Republicans to be extradited to the Six Counties. The soon-to-be-enacted Criminal Justice Bill gives massive new powers to the Garda - powers which will undoubtedly be used against Republicans. The growing discussion on removing Articles 2 and 3 from the Irish Constitution - the articles which enshrine the formal claim to a 32 county republic - is a major concession to British imperialism. The creation of all-Ireland courts and an all-Ireland police against 'terrorism' - ie the Republican movement - is being openly discussed. No doubt this was discussed when extortioner-in-chief of the RUC and now head of the Metropolitan police, Kenneth Newman, recently held secret talks with the Garda in Dublin. Recently Ian Paisley revealed that the Free State security forces have their own stocks of rubber bullets. On top of all this is the ban on Sinn Fein representatives appearing on Free State radio or television and the systematic official boycott of delegations including elected Sinn Fein representatives.

The Twenty Six County ruling class has made it perfectly clear that in order to maintain its own neo-colonial privileges it will attack, harass, imprison all those who oppose its servitude to imperialism. Every day the stark reality becomes clearer that the Free State neo-colonial regime as well as British rule in the North has to be destroyed if Ireland is to be free.

Terry Marlowe and David Reed

IRELAND/SOUTH AFRICA: ONE STRUGGLE ONE FIGHT

In Ireland, as in Britain, there are those who will support national liberation struggles when they are far away but oppose them when they threaten imperialism at home. So at the recent AGM of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement (IAAM) Niall Greene of the Free State Labour Party proposed a motion calling for the expulsion of Sinn Fein from the IAAM.

Greene's motion (which was finally withdrawn at the invitation of the IAAM Executive) argued that Sinn Fein's presence in the IAAM would confuse people who supported the 'legitimate resort to armed struggle in South Africa'. According to these hypocrites it is 'legitimate' to fight against apartheid but not 'legitimate' to fight for the liberation of Ireland. In reality those who argue this (and it should be noted that the British Communist Party has this position) support the very imperialist system which backs apartheid to the hilt. The Free State Labour Party is a partner in the Twenty Six Counties government which not only inflicts repression on the Republican movement but also maintains diplomatic, economic and political links with the apartheid regime.

In contrast, Mar'us Schoon, whose wife and daughter were murdered by apartheid agents in June spoke at the AGM. He drew an analogy between the suffering of black people in South Africa and the suffering of Irish people at the hands of imperialism. The links are clear and all genuine anti-imperialists will recognise them.

Maxine Williams

IRISH WORKERS BOYCOTT APARTHEID

Twelve women workers and one man at Dunnes Stores in Dublin have been on strike against apartheid since 19 July. The strike was refused in support of Mary Manning who called to handle South African fruit in the shop and was suspended by management. Her action followed the recently adopted policy of the Irish Distributive and Administrative Trades Union to refuse to handle South African goods.

The Twenty Six Counties imports some IR£13m of apartheid goods. By far the largest category is fruit and vegetables, worth some IR4½m. According to official South African government figures, black South African farm-workers are amongst the most exploited, receiving R32 per month in 1981 - about IR£15. This includes food payments. When these are excluded, the cash wages come to an average, miserable R23 per month.

The strike has encountered intimidation from scabs and police. On one occasion a scab motor vehicle attempted to run Mary down, while on 22 August a cop from Store Street barracks stole money donated to the strike fund, refusing to give a receipt. However, the strikers have the official backing of their own union, and the support of the Dublin Council of Trade Unions. On Saturday 15 September over 200 people turned out to support the picket of Dunnes Stores in Henry Street.

This historic action by Irish workers deserves full support. Solidarity messages and donations should be sent to the strikers, c/o IDATU, O'Lehane House, 9 Cavendish Row, Dublin 1, Ireland.

Steve Palmer

LABOUR SAY NO TO TROOPS OUT

On Friday 5 October the Labour Party once again rejected motions calling for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. The withdrawal motion was defeated by 4,625,000 votes to 450,000. This refusal to demand the withdrawal of troops is in line with the whole record of the Labour Party: 1969 sent troops into Ireland; 1974 introduced Prevention of Terrorism Act; 1974-1979 established and instituted a reign of terror through non-jury courts, withdrawal of special category status, institutionalised torture. The Labour Party in power has always faithfully served the interests of British imperialism.

NEC spokesperson and Deputy General Secretary of TGWU, Alex Kitson led the attack on the withdrawal motion and also on another motion opposing the non-jury Diplock courts and the paid perjurer strategy. In opposing both motions Kitson claimed that all trade union and political parties in the Six Counties were opposed to the motions. Sinn Fein, of course, does not count as a political party in the eyes of the imperialist Labour Party leadership. Kitson prefers the 'evidence' of the loyalist dominated Six County trade unions.

In opposing withdrawal, Kitson, on behalf of the Labour Party leadership repeated the old and clearly exposed claims that the British troops are keep-

ing the 'peace' and that there will be a 'bloodbath' if they are withdrawn. 2,500 people have died since 1969 in the struggle for Irish self-determination: what is this if not a bloodbath? British troops are there not to keep the peace but to maintain British imperialist rule. It is not a 'bloodbath' but the defeat of British imperialist rule that the Labour Party leadership really fears.

The motion opposing non-jury courts, 'supergrasses', plastic bullets and the PTA was passed by a narrow margin of 3,000,000 votes to 2,624,000. However it remains to be seen what Labour Party supporters will do here and now to give effect to this resolution.

Terry Marlowe

Roundup

Police harass miners in Lambeth

Two miners were arrested on 13 September and taken to Brixton police station. They were released after two hours without charge. On Friday 28 September the police arrested another miner collecting in Brixton tube. This miner was also released without charge.

More miners, the Streatham 4, were arrested for collecting money on the steps of Streatham Library despite a personal assurance from Commander Maronch that they were to be allowed to carry on there.

The Streatham 4 were due to appear in court on 5 October. Messages and support to Lambeth Miners Support Committee, Town Hall, Brixton, SW2 (274 7722) Tony Sheridan

Miners march in London

On Saturday 8 September a contingent of FRFI supporters joined Kent miners in a march from Plumstead to Woolwich in south east London. When the march passed Woolwich barracks a jeer went up as miners spied two British soldiers swaggering behind a fence, pick-axe handles in their mits. The rally in Woolwich was addressed by Kent NUM General Secretary Jack Collins and NUM Vice-President Mick McGahey.

Scores of signatures to the ISM 'Ban Plastic Bullets' petition were gained, including those of Jack Collins and Mick McGahey, who, along with their members, took copies of FRFI to read and study. Trevor

Miners supporters arrested in Manchester

On Saturday 29 September I was arrested in Market Street, Manchester, for coming to the assistance of a Young Communist League (YCL) member being arrested for collecting for the miners.

I was selling Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! a few yards from the YCL member. When I asked the sergeant what they were arresting him for, he replied, telling me to push off or I would be arrested. I shouted to the YCL member 'what's your name?'. After he had told me I shouted for his phone number at which I was

grabbed by PC A3606 and marched off being told I was arrested for 'obstructing the police in the course of their duty'!

Unfortunately the YCL member neither thanked a soul for the work done by FRFI to secure our release, nor is he willing to participate in a joint Defence Campaign. A letter of complaint has been written to the YCL concerning this.

For further details and petitions please contact FRFI, Box 38, 434 Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN. Bob Derbyshire

Miners support in Bradford College

On Wednesday 3 October, 17 people attended Bradford College FRFI Society's first meeting to hear Yorkshire miners Denis and Peter speak. Denis, who attended the Irish Solidarity Movement's delegation to Ireland in August, said that British people had turned their backs on the brutality directed firstly against the Irish people, then black people but were now facing it themselves.

Chris Fraser for the Revolutionary Communist Group spoke of the disgusting role played by the TUC and the Labour Party. He finished by saying: 'We damn violence: the violence of the oppressor. However we will not condemn the violence of the oppressed. Victory to the Miners!'

The success of the meeting has meant that regular food and money collections are to be held in Bradford with Yorkshire miners attending.

Bradford College FRFI supporters

Unite to fight fascism!

Over the last period regular racist attacks have become a daily nightmare for Asian people, particularly in Westenhelm.

Left wing groups have been attacked on numerous occasions. Socialist newspaper sellers, in particular FRFI sellers because of our Hands Off Ireland page, have repeatedly been attacked by loyalist thugs (see previous FRFIs). RCP sellers have been chased off the streets on at least one occasion.

Miners collections have come

under attack, and recently both the Labour Party office in Portobello and the Communist Party headquarters, have had their windows put in.

It seems without a doubt that fascism is making some attempt to organise again. FRFI has launched an initiative which will hopefully result in an anti-fascist mobilisation amongst the left. What is certain is that if nothing is done now fascism will rise unabated. Letters have been sent to all progressive groups and sympathetic MPs and councillors, alerting them to the need to organise together.

Hopefully sectarianism will not rear its ugly head again; on a previous mobilisation to defend the East End of Princes Street for socialist paper sellers (see FRFI 42) both the RCP and the SWP refused to give their support. The RCP said they 'could look after themselves' and the SWP actually left the East End where they usually stand and went somewhere else where they 'could sell more papers'. The reason they gave was that they were 'not looking for confrontation'. Surely fascism must be confronted – and by a united opposition? When will they learn that an injury to one is an injury to all?

Edinburgh FRFI Supporters

Stop the City Defence Campaign

The Stop the City Defence Campaign (STCDC) has been set up to defend the 102 people arrested on the Stop the City demonstration in Leeds on 9 August (see FRFI 42). Over the last month, campaign supporters have been active in taking the facts of what happened to the people of Leeds and building support for the campaign.

STCDC supporters are holding regular pickets of the magistrates courts in Leeds. The pickets are systematically harassed by the police. On Tuesday 4 September, FRFI and STCDC supporter John Bolloten, already facing a charge of threatening behaviour for peacefully picketing on 9 August, was arrested by Sergeant 401 for using a megaphone in front of the Town Hall – an area which the council has made a 'Free Speech Area!' In custody he was denied the right to make a phone call and

was refused toilet facilities, forcing him to urinate in his cell.

We refuse to be intimidated by such desperate tactics, and are continuing our pickets of the court.

John Stephenson and David Jackson

RCG-FRFI Colleges

RCG-FRFI supporters have established a campaigning presence in many colleges and universities. FRFI Societies are being set up in Edinburgh University, Moray House College, Edinburgh Art College, Bradford College and Manchester Polytechnic. In London societies are being formed in the Middlesex, Central, South Bank and North East London Polytechnics. FRFI supporters have also helped in forming Irish Solidarity, Anti-Deportation and South African Embassy Picket Campaign Societies in Dundee, Glasgow and Manchester Universities as well as colleges in London.

At freshers events we have sold over 700 FRFIs and handed out hundreds of leaflets as well as collecting signatures on ISM petitions. We intend to have a round of meetings on the theme 'unite to fight racism and imperialism' and we call on all progressive students to join with us in taking our revolutionary message into the colleges and universities.

Solidarity at Greenham

On 23 September women from FRFI and the ISM went to Greenham Common to show solidarity with the women's 10-day action, 20-30 September.

We used the ISM's 'ban plastic bullets' petition, gave out hundreds of leaflets advertising the ISM's solidarity weekend 13/14 October and a leaflet to mobilise for the women's contingent on the demonstration. We received massive support from the hundreds of women there, collected £11 on the petition and sold 82 FRFIs.

As soon as we started petitioning and selling we acquired an 'escort' of two policemen who followed us around the base. At the main gate we witnessed police violence. Trying to clear the way for a lorry, the police threw, pushed and bundled women aside, kicking and punching them.

A section of the Greenham women showed tremendous solidarity with the work of the ISM by giving us a £10 donation towards the solidarity weekend and are planning to come to the demonstration and conference. Alexa Byrne

FOCUS ON KENYA Wazalendo Players '84 present

'The Trial of Dedan Kimathi' by Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Githe Mugo a play set in the period of the anti-imperialist Mau Mau revolution in Kenya, of which Dedan Kimathi was the outstanding popular leader.

The Africa Centre, King Street, WC2 (nearest tube: Covent Garden)

Monday 15 October-Sunday 21 October and Tuesday 23 and Wednesday 24 October at 7.30pm Matinees: Thursday 18, Saturday 20, Tuesday 23 and Friday 26 October at 2.00pm

Tickets £5.00 and £3.50, unwaged £2.00 For information ring Tony 836 1973

CONFERENCE ON ANTI-ARAB RACISM CAUSE & EFFECT

Sunday 14 October 10.30-5.30 Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, NW1 Kings Cross tube

Western Image of Arabs (Edward Said) Media stereotyping of Arabs Legal status of Arabs Arab women Anti-Arab racism/anti-semitism Arabs as part of Britain's black community Apartheid in Israel Israel and the Third World

Exhibitions • Workshops • Creche • Admission free Organised by Palestine Solidarity Campaign Sponsored by GLC SOCIAL African, Asian, Black, Middle Eastern, Jewish, and other communities Admission £2.50 (Students/claimants £1.00) bar and food at Camden Centre 7-11pm

Miners' strike

FITZWILLIAM

Public Meeting: PUBLIC WARNING! Belfast today – Orgreave tomorrow BAN PLASTIC BULLETS! Speakers: David Reed – Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! Paul Redgrave – Doctor/Militant. Wednesday 10 October Kinsley Hotel 7.30pm. Called by Young Miner

MANCHESTER

Public Meeting Belfast/Orgreave – One struggle! One Fight! Thursday 11 October Longsight Library, Stockport Road, 7.30pm. Called by Manchester Irish Solidarity Committee

Grenada

LONDON

NJM: US out of Grenada. First year of occupation. BM NJM (UK) SE, London WC1N 3XX

LONDON

Rally Grenada Saturday 20 October St Matthews Meeting Place 10-6pm Brixton, London SW2. Called by Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement

LONDON

Public Meeting Grenada Invasion – One Year Later Speakers to include: Chris Searle, Richard Hart, Trevor Carter, Representatives from Cuba and Nicaragua, Jeremy Corbyn MP, songs and poems from Grenada. Sunday 21 October Caribbean Resources Centre 3pm-6pm 5 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1. Admission free. Further details from Britain Grenada Friendship Society, tel 530 3968

Campaigns

BRADFORD

Bradford Anti-Apartheid Group meets on Wednesday 17 October 7.30pm, Room 3, Bradford Central Library

BRADFORD

Viraj Mendis Support Committee meets Tuesday 23 October 7.30pm Room 3, Bradford Central Library

MANCHESTER

Viraj Mendis Defence Committee meets every Sunday 7.30pm, Manchester Town Hall, Albert Square. For details contact VMDC, c/o Box 38 434 Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN. Street Meetings: 'Viraj Mendis – Here to Stay! – Here to Fight! End all immigration controls' 12 and 26 October. 3.30-6pm outside 'Chelsea Girl', Piccadilly.

FRFI supporters groups

MANCHESTER

FRFI supporters group meets fortnightly. For details contact FRFI, Box 38, 434 Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN. Get involved!

EDINBURGH

October supporters Group. Get involved with FRFI activities in Edinburgh! Fortnightly meetings with political discussion and organisation of our work. Mondays 15 and 29 October, Drummond School, bottom of Broughton St 7-9pm. Admission 20p. Called by Edinburgh FRFI

BRADFORD

FRFI supporters Group. 'Stop Deportations! Smash Immigration Controls Now!' Tuesday 16 October, Queen's Hall Conference Room, Morley St, 12.30pm

Irish Solidarity Movement

The Irish Solidarity Movement has affiliated bodies in Dundee, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Bradford, Southampton, North, South and East London. The ISM can be contacted by writing to ISM, BM Box 1320, London WC1 3XX

MANCHESTER

Irish Solidarity Committee meets fortnightly on Wednesdays. For details contact MISC, Box 47, 434 Corn Exchange Buildings, Hanging Ditch, Manchester M3 4BN

EDINBURGH

Join the Edinburgh Irish Solidarity Committee! We hold street meetings, rallies and other public events in our work. Weekly planning meetings every Sunday with education and discussion. Write to EISC c/o Box 110, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candelmaker Row, Edinburgh

South Africa

Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!

PUBLIC MEETING

South Africa Explodes – which way forward for the anti-apartheid movement?

Thursday 25 October 7.00pm The Restaurant, Friends Meeting House, Euston Road NW1 (opposite Euston Tube)

Speakers: Carol Brickley, Viraj Mendis Singers and displays Admission 50p waged, 25p unwaged

SOUTH AFRICA EMBASSY PICKET CAMPAIGN

PICKET

BBC Headquarters: Kick Out Ambassador Worrall! Close Down the Racist South African Embassy Thursday 18 October 1-2pm Portland Place (near Oxford St) London W1

CAMPAIGN MEETING

7.30pm Sunday 21 October Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1 (nearest tube: Holborn)

STREET MEETING

11.00am Saturday 20 October Portobello road. Meet Ladbroke Grove tube 11am.

For further information contact SAE c/o BM City AA, London WC1N 3XX phone (01) 837 6050

CITY OF LONDON ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP

24 HOUR PICKET

Release the United Democratic Front Detainees 5.30pm Friday 26 October 5.30pm Saturday 27 October The Pavement, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, SW1 (nearest tube: Charing Cross)

CITY AA SOCIAL

Saturday evening 27 October, venue to be announced

PICKETS

of South African Embassy Trafalgar Square every Friday 5.30-7.30. Friday 19 October: Britain Out of Apartheid Apartheid Out of Britain! Friday 2 November: South African Troops Out of Namibia! Victory to SWAPO! For further information write to BM City AA, London WC1N 3XX or phone (01) 837 6050

WEEK OF ACTION ON NAMIBIA

Wednesday 31 October National lobby of Parliament

Friday 2 November City of London AA Group picket of Barclays Head Office: Lombard Street London EC3 1-2pm Barclays Out of Namibia! Victory to SWAPO! (nearest tube: Bank)

Friday 2 November Blockade Namibia's Stolen Uranium Day of action at Springfields, near Preston; Lancashire (women only); Capenhurst in Cheshire; Risley near Warrington in Lancs; Chapelcross in Dumfriesshire; and Faslane in Dumbartonshire.

Telephone CANUC (01) 267 1941/2 for more details (see in Brief page)

Saturday 3 November London AAM Committee Picket 10-12am Barclays Bank, Charing Cross, WC2

Forums

Public discussion meetings on The Revolutionary Road to Communism in Britain: Manifesto of the Revolutionary Communist Group

LONDON

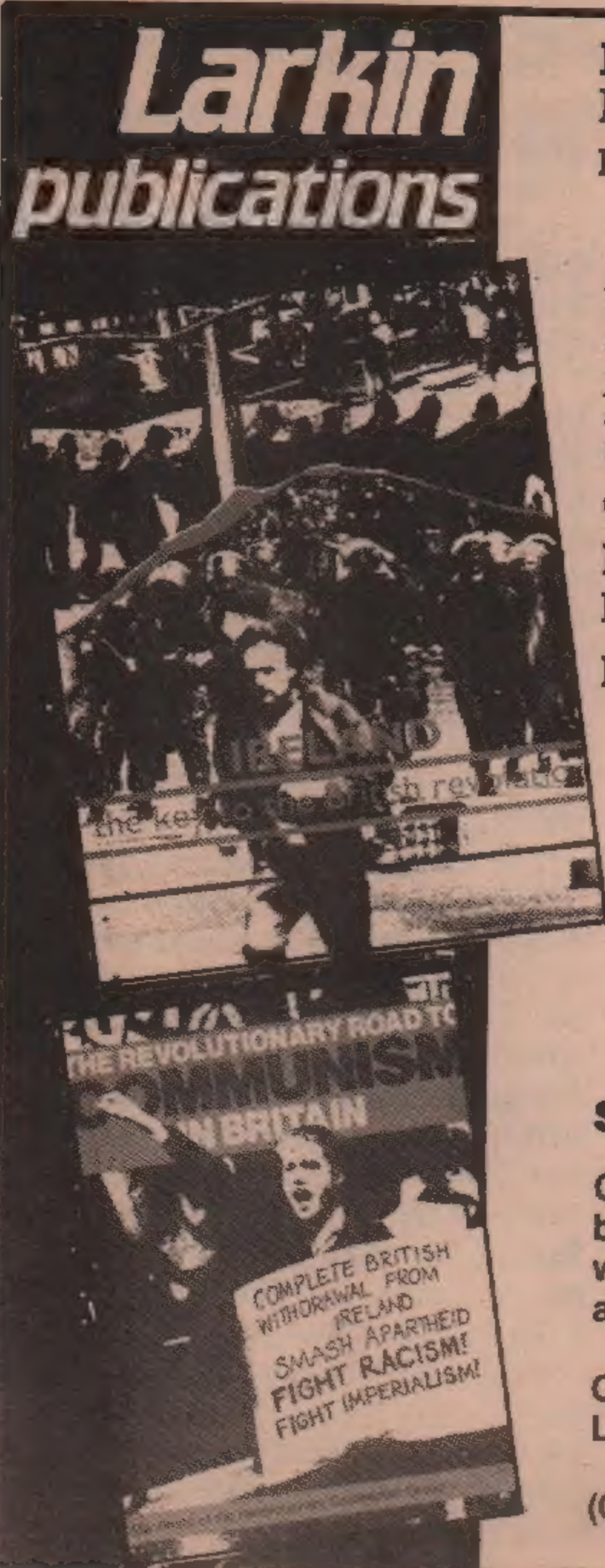
Tuesday 16 October 'The challenge to British imperialism: South Africa'. Tuesday 30 October 'The British State's assault on democratic rights'. At Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, London NW1, 7.30pm (nearest tube: Euston) Admission 50p waged/25p unwaged.

MANCHESTER

16 October 'The British State's assault on democratic rights', 30 October 'The split in the working class movement in Britain', 13 November 'Building a Communist Party in Britain today'. All at Slade Lane Neighbourhood Centre, Stockport Road, Longsight, 7.30pm

EDINBURGH

Thursday 18 October 'The British State's attack on democratic rights', Thursday 1 November 'The split in the working class movement in Britain' at Cannonball House (top of Royal Mile), 7.30pm



Ireland: the key to the British revolution by David Reed

Price £3.95 (+50p p&p) 450 pages

'David Reed's book gives a detailed account of the last 140 years of the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland and its effect on the workers' movement in Britain. It is written in a simple and easy to read style and must be of great value to the teenage youth... and also to the adult worker who knows little about the struggle in Ireland or its vital importance...'

Sean Mac Stiofain

The revolutionary road to communism in Britain

Manifesto of the Revolutionary Communist Group

Price £1.50 (+30p p&p) 175 pages

Readers will be pleased to know that the number of copies of 'Ireland: the key to the British revolution' that we have been paid for rose to over 1000 in September and considerably more have been sold.

Many thanks to all supporters who sent in bookshop addresses and ordered the books from libraries. Please carry on, it has been very effective.

SPECIAL OFFER FOR XMAS

Give your friends a useful Xmas present – order both the books for £5 including postage. If you want we will send them direct to your friends saying they are from you.

Order from: Larkin Publications, BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX

(Offer ends 1 January 1985)

Paranoia?

comrades, FRFI has repeatedly pointed out (eg 31/41) that the appointment of Sir Kitson and Kenneth Newman in 1982 as Commander-in-Chief of British Army UK Land Forces and Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police respectively, heralded an escalation of the ruling class preparations for civil unrest. The miners strike has brought home the realities of this approach: road blocks, control of media, police beatings, judgements etc – to the Nottinghamshire area.

It is clear also that the state has other term considerations. In the aftermath of the installation of 'traffic' lights and the 'System X' 'easy' telephone service, continues the old one-storey Hyson police station, situated in the heart of a 'riot-prone' area, has been replaced by a camera-erated fortress situated outside but within easy reach of – potential trouble spots. Some speculation has even been voiced that the station has an underground section containing a 'hard core', giving it a 'sensitive' data processing area. Now if this is happening in 'scab city' it makes me wonder what is happening in more volatile areas? Perhaps the increasing multitude of 'subversive elements' could write to FRFI to enlighten us?

I remember about a year ago a trade informing me that the RCG was 'paranoid'. But paranoia is an unjustified fear that someone is watching you! Name and address supplied Nottingham

Day in Hull Segregation Unit

FRFI, I have been in solitary confinement for the last five years now and it was the worst thing the Establishment could have done – for it did not break my spirit as intended – it actually strengthened me. Forced to rely upon my own resources, I examined my life's actions, those that hurt me, and I studied and read. I became quite clear to me why the so-called criminal is so potentially dangerous – it's because he defies the regulations imposed on him by his so-called superiors – who are in bomb proof shelters after a start a war. But the criminal

makes a drastic mistake – for he decides to act like our corrupt politicians do – and feather his nest. He in fact lacks direction; the motivation is there and resolve – but he is not informed enough to reason why he does what he does – and what in reality he ought to do.

A criminal's actions are in fact an outward manifestation of political rejection, against the power faction of that period of time – to wit, as you so express it 'Thatcher's mob'. But it goes deeper than Thatcher, she's only the tip of the iceberg; it's entrenched establishment; the old school tie back to feudal times; our government is based on 'force', always has been – it's a fallacy to say Britain is democracy defined – Britain is repression and graft.

Now I'd like to disclose a day in the 'Hull Segregation Unit'; Friday 18.11.83 at 1430 hours I watched Colin Blackshaw being assaulted and placed in a restrainter belt (a medieval instrument). He was pinned to his bed by a horde of turnkeys, one rammed his face in the mattress to quiet his screams of pain (it unsettles the other prisoners) others wrenched his arms up to his neck, while another bent both his legs back and up to his buttocks, the right being crossed over the left; the screw standing between CB's knees had his arms between his thighs and reaching through grasped CB's feet; he wrenched these down towards CB's buttocks (crushing the leg underneath and compressing the tendons of the top leg) and then heaved them back towards himself. CB was screaming or attempting to, non-stop with agony: 'I can't breathe, you're stifling me; my legs, you're breaking them' – and screams – all muffled by ramming his face in the mattress. When he was brought out of the cell in a belt, his knotted legs still held by the screw as described, his arms shackled by the belt, his face 6 inches from the floor as two screws gripped him by the biceps; he was rushed downstairs in this position, his face just missing them, the 'Unit' was in uproar as I described completely those events. I'd watched through the holes of a ventilator above the door, I actually saw them punching his helpless carcass. My door opened and I was threatened by a dishevelled mob – most of whom had split knuckles. I asked to see the chief – Refused. Placed on report for causing a disturbance – I'd been shouting – they refused to say what I'd shouted. Complained to VC. Wrote petition. Got 10-74 Durham Jail. When I returned all the ventilators had been blocked up.

Who is Big Brother?

In writing to express my utter disgust and concern at the recent remarks made by the Home Secretary Leon Brittan, threatening savage sentences, even to the extent of life sentences, for young miners on duty.

Core of young men have been snatched from picket lines for doing nothing at all. Their only crimes have been fighting for their jobs. They do because they don't wish to join in the misery of the four million unemployed, who no one seems to care or worry about.

Leon Brittan's insulting speech referring to young miners as Hitler's boot brigade, infuriates me, as many of the fathers and brothers of the young men fought and died in World War II to help to free the Race people from which Mr Brittan originates.

Who is the perpetrator of the erosion of Civil Rights, the Draconian conditions, the curfews, the road blocks, the questioning of a person's political views? Certainly not the ordinary miner. All he is concerned about is to save his job and live peacefully in his own community. Ask, 'Who is Big Brother?'

The government committed the first act of violence on the first day of the miners strike, by stopping the Kent miners from going through the tunnel of peace. How did the police know these miners were going to strike again in the tunnel at that particular time? So I ask you again 'Who posed to the miners?'

Saying, 'Evil thinkers are Evil doers', and in my view this is the Government. It's a far cry since Mrs Thatcher quoted the words of Assisi, and what a pity she didn't keep to those words. Theoretically uttered. Maybe the country would be in a 'peaceful' period if the Falklands crisis talked out, rather than fought out, the loss of so many young lives, both English and Argentine.

Ordinary people of this country stopped being so apathetic and started fighting to bring this country back to what it was before Mrs Thatcher's face of the massive police presence, road blocks etc in the streets of Ireland and know what kind of reaction that causes. I sincerely hope has come to say 'Enough is Enough'.

Yours sincerely,
William Doody
William, West Yorkshire

On 24 August 1984 late noon, I heard turnkeys enter a cell, then screams of pain: 'My arms, you're breaking my bloody arms' – followed by high pitched screams, feet trampled, voices cursed 'get the cunt downstairs'. Screams continuously then silence followed by – laughter, high pitched giggling and jokes about 'bloody nig-nogs.' I learnt the recipient of the brutality was one Stephen Sweet a Black man; I complained that the assault was racially motivated, wrote to the Race Relations Board, petitioned – Sweet had been brutalised beyond pride and human endurance – I was placed on report – causing a disturbance by shouting to a passing work party: 'They just beat up Stephen Sweet a Negro, tell his pals'. I refused Govs punishment, demanded VC, demanded a solicitor to advise me as per, after Tarrant report – refused, lost all privileges, on 10-74 to Walton (as of now) and restrained from bringing even my unanswered mail or reading glasses – rehabilitation 1984 courtesy Thatcher & Co.

Approximately 10/12 days prior to Sweet's assault a guy (Foley or Filey) could be heard being dragged quietly (like a limp body) down the landing – he later told me and others that 5 screws came in his cell and knocked him unconscious, he described them, he was petrified – poor sod. I complained to no avail.

More later, in solidarity.
Bruce Childs
HMP Liverpool

Unlocking the problem

Dear FRFI,

Your comments on the Ireland's War – ISM split were most helpful and much appreciated. I just couldn't make out how two groups could share the same aim and yet be so divided – I could see that the ISM tactics were sound, but then could see no fault in those of the I/W group either. However, I finally found the key to unlocking the problem in your stressing of the phrase, 'Mobilising the masses', and, bearing this objective in mind the rest just fell into place. I've worked it out as follows OK. I/W, with their very narrow 'hard line' approach far from reaching people will in fact tend to isolate themselves because, to reach people you must be relevant to them, ie, join them in their own struggles as with the miners, prisoners, anti-apartheid groups etc. Only then, when your credibility and commitment has been proven can you realistically begin to get individuals, groups, etc to relate their personal struggles to that of the oppressed in general. I/W, by ignoring this basic fact not only isolate themselves but also run the risk of getting so out of touch with the 'masses' that – with the ever growing state repression we're facing – people could (with the use of State propaganda) begin to focus attention on such groups in a very negative way. So, in reality the tactics of I/W are not simply 'direct' but are in fact, divisionary and even dangerous, making our task of uniting the people that much more difficult – by alienating them from the revolutionary movement – and, presenting our class enemy with an opportunity to firstly, mount attacks on revolutionary groups as a whole and secondly by doing so, allowing them to divert attention from the real reason for state repression i.e. capitalism. The ISM on the other hand by staying firmly in touch with the individual struggles relevant to the people – ie, 'just one step ahead' – do not run the risk of isolating themselves into a vulnerable position and so can at each level of the struggle relate to the people in a meaningful and instructive way, winning their support and uniting them into a truly revolutionary force.

Jimmy Anderson
Parkhurst Prison



PERU: DIRTY WAR

Dear FRFI,

On 24 August 1984 the High Command of the Peruvian Armed Forces confirmed in an official communiqué that fifty bodies had been discovered in the locality of Pucayacu. Subsequent investigations showed that the victims, 49 men and 1 woman, all young and some adolescents, had been dead for some 5 days.

Pucayacu, whose name in the local Quechua language means Red River, is located in the central Andes in the troubled region of Ayacucho where, in 1824, the battle was fought which sealed the independence of the Spanish colonies and which today is paradoxically one of the most underdeveloped and poorly nourished of the Andean territories.

The news from Peru is deeply shocking. Fifty young people have been killed in a manner reminiscent of the methods used by the Nazis of Hitler's Germany – tortured bodies with broken arms and legs, missing tongues and dislocated joints dumped in a common grave.

The military communiqué tries to explain away the remains as a grave dug by the 'Senderistas', a group of armed terrorists opposed to the present government, in which were buried some of their guerrillas after a battle. This can only be a cruel and wholly repugnant way of attempting to hide the truth. How can this explain the marks of torture on the bodies, the missing fingers, broken limbs and pulled out tongues? How can this explain skulls destroyed by bullets fired at close range or the marks of strangulation?

It would be absurd to accept that these deaths could have occurred in regular combat. What is happening in Peru is the product of insane minds in military uniform. This dirty war, genocide and terrorism is the product of a government which leaves unpunished the perpetrators of these ghastly crimes – the antisubversive troops of the police force and the marines. The army also plays its part in the conspiracy of silence.

The workers, women and students of Peru must not be left abandoned and alone. Today, more than ever, they need the international solidarity of all those who love social justice, without which we can never find peace.

Jorge Aliaga

Campaign for Gay-Lit

Dear FRFI,

Thank you for the mention of my campaign in the issue No 33. I was very surprised when FRFI offered to do a write up in their paper, because usually so much of what we do and say are totally ignored by the straight media.

Most people will read my article and not even have an idea of what it is to be gay and in prison. Most readers will think that you have to be a criminal to be in prison, and they are right. I used to get upset at one time, to even listen to stories about gay inmates. They asked for it, now they got it, was my way of dealing with it. I'm sure that most gays in the streets

think this way, and frankly they do not want to have their good times interrupted by the plight of their brothers in prison. My experience with the prison system has been a sobering awakening to the lack of concern that most people, not only gays, have towards prisoners. It isn't only that the inmates in all the prisons have lost their freedom, they have lost friends and family as well.

We are only a community when we do not get our own way or when we are threatened. There are a few individuals that really care about what a prisoner needs, or in this case thinks.

I would like to thank your paper for printing the article.

David Abdie
Campaign for Gay-Lit.

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No separate struggle

Dear Friends,

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of a copy of 'Ireland – the key to the British revolution' by David Reed. The book has been added to our Social Science Library where, we are certain, it will prove useful to both our teachers and students.

The college expresses its gratitude for your support and looks forward to receiving other material which could be of use to us. We do not view our struggle as separate from those of other people struggling for freedom, justice, and peace, and are therefore duty bound to acquaint ourselves with their efforts, setbacks, and victories.

Amanda!

M Jhathan

Somafco Resource Department
Solomon Mahlangu Freedom
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HANDS OFF IRELAND

common cause

Irish Solidarity Weekend

The events of the 13 and 14 October called by the Irish Solidarity Movement are attracting great interest around the country; miners are travelling from Yorkshire and Fife for the weekend; women in struggle, students, anti-racist and gay people have given their support. The demonstration on the 13 October will be the opportunity to unite all these groups in solidarity with the struggle of the Irish people for self-determination and in support of Britain's political hostages, the courageous Irish POWs incarcerated in English gaols.

The conference - Belfast, Brixton, Orgreave - An Injury to One is an Injury to All - will be a unique occasion. The impressive platform of speakers brings together representatives of the forces fighting against British imperialist domination of Ireland, those committed to the building of an anti-imperialist movement in Britain, and a representative of the organised working class, a miners' leader, in struggle for the basic rights of their jobs, pits and communities.

The Irish Solidarity Movement is honoured to welcome John McCluskey, a courageous fighter for the Irish people and, during ten years incarceration in English gaols, a staunch defender of not only the rights of Irish POWs but of all prisoners within those walls. Mrs Elizabeth Hill, the mother of Paul Hill, framed and imprisoned for life, has spoken at past ISM events and gives a moving testimony of life under British rule and the terrible harassment meted out to prisoners' relatives by the British prison system. They are joined by Malcolm Pitt, President of the Kent NUM, who has consistently during the miners' strike drawn the links between the miners' struggle and that of the Irish people. It is fitting that David Reed should stand on the same platform. David Reed, author of 'Ireland: the key to the British revolution' and a leading member of the Revolutionary Communist Group/Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!, has consistently argued and fought for Marx's position that 'a nation that oppresses another can never itself be free'. His contribution to the way forward to build a movement in Britain is of enormous value - the Irish Solidarity Movement was founded on that principle and FRFI has always argued that those forces in Britain who experience the repression and brutality of the British state will be the first to show solidarity and 'common cause' with the Irish people. The struggle of the miners has shown the truth of this position - for as they experience police brutality against them they are coming to see that their struggle is against the same enemy as that of the Irish people - British imperialism. The Irish Solidarity Weekend can only take the work of making 'common cause' with the Irish people forward.

Despite invitations to every major organisation on the British left to sponsor and support the Irish Solidarity Weekend and unite in solidarity with the Irish people, their response has been the usual sectarian refusal to even acknowledge its existence. FRFI/RCG, RCL, Proletarian, Red Action are the exceptions. Two branches of the Troops Out Movement, Bristol and Lambeth, have sponsored, a step forward for the unity the ISM has been fighting for. The RCP/Irish Freedom Movement has refused to sponsor the weekend. The ISM will continue to fight for united action amongst all those groups who are opposed to British rule in Ireland.

Pauline Sellars

The departure of Northern Ireland Secretary James Prior was treated as a minor tragedy by the British bourgeois press, which lamented the passing of a 'good', 'sincere' and 'honest' man. His replacement, Douglas Hurd is now also being portrayed as a Tory wet and able diplomat. In fact Hurd is a veteran of the Foreign Office where he was intimately involved in the cover up of the death of Helen Smith in Saudi Arabia. He is also the author of several thrillers one of which, 'Vote to Kill' (a novel about an IRA plot to kill a British prime minister) contains the following revealingly anti-Irish and racist passage:

'She caught a fire like a fever. The Irish fever, the worst variety known to men. It destroys all gentleness, truth and sensible calculation'.

Hurd's new assistant is the Tory ape-man, Rhodes Boyson, fresh from savaging the social services in Britain, he is now to be inflicted on the people of the Six Counties as Minister with special responsibility for economic affairs.

Goodbye Mr Prior

Hurd has already stated that there will be no change in British policy in the Six Counties. And so he swiftly proved. On 2 October Gerry Adams and seven other Sinn Fein members were arrested in dawn raids by the RUC and British Army. They were questioned under the 1971 Immigration Act concerning the appearance of Martin Galvin at the 12 August anti-internment rally in Belfast. British policy under Prior decreed the cold-blooded murder of Sean Downes and the injuring of dozens more when the RUC attacked the rally with plastic bullets. Now under Hurd these same RUC murderers are unleashed to arrest Sinn Fein leaders.

Hurd has also already categorically refused the demand of loyalist prisoners for segregation. Loyalist prisoners have been on hunger strike for this demand - a demand supported by Republican prisoners - although the hunger strike is presently suspended. The British government regards segregation as a form of political recognition of the prisoners.

Hence its intransigence.

What is the policy that Hurd is pledged to continue? Under Prior British strategy was an attempt to halt the growth of revolutionary nationalism by trying to crush and isolate the revolutionary struggle in Ireland. Both British imperialism and the Free State regime have become increasingly anxious at the obvious growth in support for Sinn Fein shown in both national and local elections. Along with repression directed against revolutionary nationalism has gone Prior's commitment to:

'do all we can to support constitutional nationalism.'

This has meant on the one hand increasingly specific repression directed against Republican activists and their events whilst on the other an attempt to court the middle class nationalists of the SDLP.

Since November 1982 nineteen people have been murdered in shoot-to-kill operations. The RUC men who comm-

itted these murders have, if brought to court at all, been acquitted as in the case of the murderers of Seamus Grew and Eugene Toman. At least 65 people have been convicted in non-jury courts and hundreds more held on the word of paid perjurers. Two large Republican show trials remain outstanding with 32 people charged on the evidence of Harry Kirkpatrick and 37 on the word of Raymond Gilmour. A typical victim of this strategy is John Gerard O'Reilly who has served the equivalent of a five year sentence on remand awaiting trial and is now on the 'list' of his fifth informer. Both shoot-to-kill and the informer strategy are the British imperialist methods of ridding itself of unwanted opponents.

The British have made it clear that no



cause of the Irish people. In reality 'joint' sovereignty will boil down to co-ordinated repression against Republicans on both sides of the border.

Whilst bourgeois politicians come and go, the suffering of the Irish people intensifies. The latest Six Counties unemployment figures show that unemployment stands at 127,089 - an all-time high. 23% of the population is either unemployed or on government-funded training schemes. In nationalist areas the results of sectarian discrimination are clear. Male unemployment in Strabane is 51%, in Newry 40.3%, in Derry 38.9%. Unemployment, sectarian discrimination, poverty and repression - that is the reality of British rule in Ireland.

Maxine Williams



Paul Caruana - see article right

Demonstration

13 October
Repatriation for all Irish POWs!
Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!

Assemble 1pm Bidborough Street
London WC1 (Tube: Kings Cross)

Conference

Belfast, Brixton, Orgreave - An
Injury to One is an Injury to All
14 October

Caxton House, St John's Way, London
N19 (Tube: Archway) at 9.30am
Speakers from Ireland and Britain
including John McCluskey Irish POW
(due to be released shortly before the
conference), David Reed Author
Ireland - Key to the British Revolution,
Malcolm Pitt President of Kent NUM,
in personal capacity, Mrs Elizabeth
Hill, mother of Irish POW, Paul Hill.
Films, workshops. Admission £2.50 (£2
in advance) waged, £1 (75p in advance)
unwaged.

Torture reinstated

Over the past few months news has started to come out of RUC barracks again of physical and psychological torture of detainees. Detainees have been suffocated with black plastic bags over the head, slapped, punched, attacked and threatened with execution. In the late 1970s such torture of the nationalist people was an 'administrative practice' employed by the RUC as a means of terrorising the nationalist people and criminalising their struggle to free Ireland from British rule. Torture was used to extract 'confessions' to ensure convictions before the non-jury Diplock courts. This system was set up by Kenneth Newman, then Chief Constable of the RUC, and judicially sanctioned in May 1977 by Lord Justice McGonigal. This judgement stated that the RUC could use a 'moderate degree of physical maltreatment for the purpose of inducing someone to make a statement' - the Torturer's Charter.

Alongside the informer strategy it now appears that the RUC are again resorting to naked terror and torture as a means of extracting 'confessions'. One of the most brutal examples is that of Paul Caruana. He was arrested outside Derry on 11 August under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. For five days he was systematically tortured in Castlereagh barracks. During his interrogation the RUC tried to force his head between his legs as he sat on the floor, causing back and neck injuries. He said, 'At one point the officer pushing my head down climbed on my back and started pushing all his weight on me. The pain was so severe I cried out "Oh, Jesus no"'. Later the other one cleared his throat and blew the contents of his nose over my face.' He was taken to Dundonald Hospital on 13 August by the RUC and given a surgical

collar to wear. But he was immediately returned to Castlereagh to face further interrogation and torture. He was slapped and punched and the RUC then tried to suffocate him with a black plastic bag at which point the RUC told him that 'they had been training in this since the troubles began and doctors couldn't see any marks...'

After nearly three days in detention Brendan Kearney, his solicitor, was allowed access. This was long after the 48 hour period for which the RUC can deny access. Paul Caruana's case has been taken up by the NCCL who commissioned medical reports, Richard Balfe MEP, who has written to the Northern Ireland Office, and John Hume, SDLP leader, who has demanded that medical reports for all detainees in

Castlereagh and Gough barracks in the last two months be released.

The RUC and the NIO have refused to comment as complaints against the RUC have been taken out by Paul Caruana and therefore the case is sub-judice - a legal trick used to create a wall of silence while an issue dies down. The British state was forced in the 1970s to attempt to cover up the torture as the publicity grew. For a long time under the direction of Kenneth Newman, the RUC claimed that the injuries sustained in detention were self-inflicted. Dr Irwin, a police surgeon, testified to the contrary and was immediately subjected to a smear campaign. Britain was forced to hold an inquiry after an Amnesty International Report in 1978 exposed the torture. The result was a private, and not public inquiry which led to the Bennett Report. This laid down recommendations for future interrogations including access to a solicitor, 48 hours, a medical examination, 24 hours and closed circuit to uniformed RUC officers to interrogations. All these assault measures against torture were negated in a report that they should be followed as long as they did not impair the efficiency of interrogation leading to a 'terrorist' crime.

The RUC are now systematically ignoring even these recommendations. The 'Torturer's Charter' is being reinstated.

Chas Millington